

MOTION

The City of Los Angeles's Municipal Lobbying Ordinance was first adopted in 1994, and it has never been comprehensively updated. On three occasions—in 2008, 2016, and again in 2022—the Ethics Commission conducted detailed reviews of the City's lobbying laws, which included soliciting and receiving extensive public comments that affirmed the need to strengthen the laws.

Following each review, the Ethics Commission urged the City Council to adopt long-overdue amendments to modernize and improve the Municipal Lobbying Ordinance. The City Council took no action in response to the first two transmittals (C.F. 07-3005-S2 and C.F. 18-0171), however, allowing them to simply expire. Despite the fact that the Ethics Commission sent this Council its most recent set of recommended revisions to the ordinance over six months ago (C.F. 22-0560), the item was never agendized in the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee Committee. To date, this has meant that the City Council has taken no action on three rounds of the Ethics Commission recommendations regarding the City's lobbying laws.

The recent disclosure of the backroom conversation between former Council President Martinez, Councilmembers de León and Cedillo, and former Los Angeles County Federation of Labor President Ron Herrera has deepened a lack of public trust in City officials and brought into sharp focus the need for the City to take decisive action to ensure accountability at all levels of City government. Allegations of corruption that have emerged over the past two years, some of which have resulted in multiple FBI indictments and convictions, only underscore that need.

The City's lobbying laws must be updated now to ensure that the public knows who is attempting to influence City decisions, as well as the means they use in their attempts. Also essential is limiting the financial ties between lobbyists and City decision makers and the resulting perception that those who provide political contributions get preferential access. The Ethics Commission's current proposal makes great strides toward achieving these important goals. In light of the recently revealed conduct of members of this Council and the urgent need to restore public trust, however, the City Council can and should go further to strengthen the proposal.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council request the City Attorney, in coordination with the Ethics Commission, to prepare and present a draft ordinance to adopt the reforms regarding the City's lobbying laws found in Council File No. 22-0560, with the following modifications to further strengthen the laws:

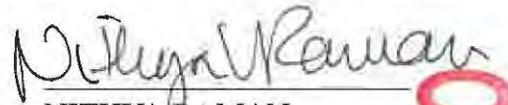
- Eliminate the expansion of exemptions beyond what exists in current law;
- Prohibit lobbying entities from fundraising for and delivering contributions to City candidates and officeholders;

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- Require lobbyists to disclose that they are lobbyists and the name of their client whenever they communicate with City personnel either verbally or in writing;
- Clarify that a “proposed or pending matter of municipal legislation” includes matters without a Council File or official report that are newly raised by lobbying entities or their clients;
- Require lobbying records to be maintained for at least five years; and
- Change the Ethics Commission's statute of limitations to five years.

PRESENTED BY:



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Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:



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