

March 17, 2017

Sacramento City Council
City Hall, 915 I Street,
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Sunshine Ordinance, Ethics Commission, & Ethics Code -- SUPPORT

Dear Mayor Steinberg and Members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Sacramento Integrity Project, we are pleased to support the draft Sunshine, Ethics Commission, and Ethics Code ordinances. These improvements over the *status quo* are strong and substantive, collectively making Sacramento a model for more accessible, transparent, and accountable city government.

Transparency is vital to public trust and engagement. The proposed Sunshine Ordinance makes key changes to city practice that will open up government, giving our citizens a better understanding of, and opportunity to participate in, city decision-making. For example, going forward *ad hoc* committees will be public under the Ralph M. Brown Act, so that Sacramentans can observe and weigh in on those serious policy issues that require special consideration. City officials will now have to use or copy city email addresses for city business, ensuring that public records are preserved and facilitating records requests. And behested payments will be reported in advance of decisions affecting a payor, providing disclosure that is timely rather than historical. This ordinance also codifies many best practices the city already engages in, like the five-day notice period for City Council agendas and internet postings of important documents, like city policies and procedures and public officials' financial disclosures.

Ethical government conduct is equally critical to sustaining public trust in local democracy. Sacramento prides itself on having a responsive and accountable City Hall. Consolidating the city's ethics laws and assigning a dedicated body with the responsibility of educating and enforcing these rules demonstrates a clear commitment that ethical conduct comes first. This ordinance would establish, for the first time in Sacramento history, an independent Ethics Commission that would be responsible for educating officials, candidates, and the general public about local ethics rules; for reviewing city ethics policies and recommending improvements or changes to improve clarity; and for receiving and investigating allegations of non-compliance, if and when necessary. The ordinance also assigns review and enforcement of the city's campaign finance ordinance to the state Fair Political Practices Commission, an arrangement that has been proven effective and economical in San Bernardino County.

Over a year ago, the City Council adopted a framework for comprehensive redistricting, ethics, and transparency reform. Last November, the voters passed Measure L, adopting a national model for

independent municipal redistricting. These three ordinances are the remaining pieces of that laudable framework. Recognizing that building an ethical and transparent city government is a continual process, not an endpoint, these ordinances before the City Council represent a sizable and significant step forward on that path. We are proud to support them and urge the Council to enact them into law.

Sincerely,

/s/ Paula Lee

Co-President
League of Women Voters of
Sacramento County

/s/ Nicolas Heidorn

Policy and Legislation Counsel
California Common Cause

/s/ Luisa Menchaca

Immediate Past President
League of United Latin American
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/s/ Angela Tillotson

Chair
Midtown Neighborhood
Association

/s/ Jann Dorothy

President
Stonewall Democratic Club

/s/ Tamie Dramer

Chair
Organize Sacramento

/s/ Brandon Rose

President
Environmental Council of
Sacramento

/s/ James Cathcart

Treasurer
Sacramento Taxpayers Opposed
to Pork

/s/ Miguel Cordova

President
Latino Democratic Club

/s/ Efrén Guttierrez

Executive Director
Chicano Consortium of
Sacramento

/s/ Bill Edgar

Individually
(Former City Manager
City of Sacramento)

/s/ Gary Winak

Individually
(Former Head of Enforcement
Fair Political Practices Comm'n)