



Reseda Neighborhood Council

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Dear Board of Neighborhood Commissioners and Los Angeles City Ethics Commission,

The Reseda Neighborhood Council requests consideration of an addition to the municipal lobbying ordinance. Under section [48.08.8](#) of the current lobbying ordinance, a lobbyist disclosure is only required for written communications to neighborhood councils. We believe the ordinance should be updated to include the same disclosure when a lobbyist makes an oral presentation or public comment to a neighborhood council that is related to their lobbying efforts.

As you may be aware, neighborhood councils continue to meet telephonically due to COVID and it is widely expected that this will continue in at least some form even when/if the pandemic passes. Additionally, under AB 361, we are prohibited from requiring "speaker cards," which is where traditionally lobbying disclosures had happened on our council. While Reseda can require a disclosure for its own meetings, that disclosure has no teeth for enforcement as it is not an ordinance and it also does not address the other 98 neighborhood councils which similarly serve as elected advisory bodies to the city.

We believe the lack of oral lobbyist disclosure requirement leaves many neighborhood council board members at an information disadvantage and that it should be addressed for the following reasons:

1) Transparency. We believe every voting member at a board meeting has the right to the knowledge if a lobbyist is speaking on an item for which they are compensated to lobby. 2) Diffusion of responsibility. A lobbyist may send a correct written disclosure either via mail or email, but often these communications do not go to every member of the board. Unless the



board member is diligent in passing along these communications, then it is possible there would be other members of the board who do not know of the lobbyist status of the individual speaking. 3) Lack of training. We do not receive training on identifying or looking up lobbyist activities in the city through the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. We believe the legal onus should be on the lobbyist to be as upfront and straightforward with the board as possible. Additionally, the responsibility is then on the paid lobbyist rather than the volunteer board member when it comes to the pursuit of this information.

We believe this small change would be a big step for increasing transparency and allow for board members to have the most informed votes possible.

Thank you for your consideration of this topic,

Reseda Neighborhood Council