



Shalice Reynoso, MMC
CCAC Legislative Director

News Clerks Should Know:

Released 05/11/09

[Please pass this along to your City Council Members, City Managers, and Labor Negotiators]

SB 711 (Leno) Public Meetings; Closed Session; Labor Negotiations

In January, March, and April we notified you of SB711, proposed by the California Newspaper Publishers Association, which would have required disclosure of written communications and “all known matters” prior to entering into closed session regarding labor negotiations.

The City Clerks Association of California and the League of California Cities took an “oppose” position on this bill.

I am pleased to report that there has been no further progress on this bill as the second committee hearing was canceled at the request of the author. The deadlines have passed for any further action to be taken on this bill this legislative year.



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SAVE YOUR CITY – May Budget Revision Threatens to Borrow 8% of Local Government Property Tax Revenues

The League of California Cities has launched its “Save Your City” campaign and is asking cities to act quickly and aggressively to fight the state’s proposal to borrow 8% of local government property tax revenues.

Three immediate actions cities are being asked to take:

- Today, May 14, call the Governor, your Senator and Assembly Member to tell them what a \$2 billion seizure of property tax revenues would do to your community.
 - Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (916) 445-2841
 - **We are asking city officials to make calls to their legislators and Governor on Thursday between noon and 3:00 p.m.**
- Sign up to join the Save Your City coalition by Monday, May18. (Get details from your League Regional Representative.)
- Record a video testimonial for the Save Your City website. The video should include testimonials about the importance of city services and the damaging effects of state borrowing. (Get details from your League Regional Representative.)

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

1. **Cities Already Losing Hundreds of Millions of Millions to State Budget.** Since 1991 the state has seized over **\$8.6 billion** of city property tax revenues statewide to fund the state budget, and it takes almost \$900 million each year from cities even with the passage of Prop. 1A in 2004. The overwhelming passage of Prop. 1A prevents the state from permanently taking an even larger share of the property tax except by borrowing it temporarily.
2. **Governor Has Opposed Borrowing as Fiscally Irresponsible.** The Governor has established a legacy of being fiscally responsible and avoiding incurring debt for the annual budget. He has consistently called it fiscally irresponsible to borrow from local government or transportation - he should not lose that legacy now and fumble since he's carried the ball all the way to the one yard line.
3. **Borrowing is a Bailout and Subprime Loan.** Asking local governments for a bailout of the state is the political and financial equivalent of making a sub-prime loan to a borrower which has terrible credit.
4. **Public Safety Cuts Have Already Occurred.** Asking cities that are already in fiscal distress at this time for a loan will have real consequences for public safety and other vital services which cities have already started reducing due to the economic downturn. Californians want public safety protected. 74 percent of Californians oppose cuts to law enforcement and police according to a field poll released April 30.
5. **Borrowing Will Disproportionately Affect Some Areas.** Many cities have unemployment rates higher than the statewide average (e.g., Compton's is over 19%). Choosing to borrow from these cities will disproportionately and dramatically impact the local economies and services.
6. **Public Opposes Borrowing.** Borrowing is irresponsible because it deepens the state deficit. It is akin to working out and getting into shape only to take a few weeks off and lose everything you've worked for. The voters agree. An Oct. 2008 PPIC survey found that 91 percent of Californians think it is wrong for the state to borrow to balance the budget. (http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/survey/S_1008MBS.pdf).
7. **Borrowing Will Devastate Essential City Services.** Borrowing also will cripple local services. California cities are not in a position to lend the state of California property taxes to close the state's budget deficit. Cities are on the brink of severe fiscal hardship as the current economic climate has already forced cities to lay off police, fire and other staff, furlough employees, slash programs and reduce services.
8. **Do No Harm.** There are no easy answers, but the physician's Hippocratic oath is apt at this juncture: "First, do no harm." Borrowing would inflict serious harm on the people of California and make our communities more dangerous. No one, including the Governor, wants this.



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Cities Begin Declaring State of Fiscal Hardship

More than 40 cities have passed or are scheduled to pass a resolution declaring a state of severe fiscal hardship and opposing the proposal to take local property tax funds to finance the state budget.

As stated by League President Judy Mitchell, "These resolutions are a sign of the serious financial strain many cities face as a result of the economic downturn. We can't allow the state to compound the existing crisis facing many cities by taking local property taxes or other revenues."

Contact your League Regional Representative if you are interested in obtaining a sample resolution.



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Released 05/15/09

CCAC Sponsors AB 715 (Caballero) to Eliminate the Requirement to Publish Ordinances

The CCAC Legislative Committee is proud to announce that AB 715 successfully passed the Assembly Floor by a unanimous 75-0 vote and is now being considered by the Senate.

AB 715 was written and sponsored by CCAC. This bill would allow the option of posting ordinances on the internet instead of publishing in the newspaper. If the internet option is used, then cities must also mail specific notice to those who have filed a written request for such notices.

CCAC believes that this bill meets the expectations of today's citizenry who are looking for free, broad, and immediate access to information. It also meets the needs of residents who cannot afford paid newspaper subscriptions and relieves the financial burden on cities of paying costly legal advertising rates.

This bill is officially supported by the League of California Cities and the City Clerks Association of California. We need your support in getting this bill passed.

CALL TO ACTION!

We need every city to register its support of this important bill. This is a vital step in the legislative process because the list of all those cities which have submitted letters of support will be read when the vote is taken by the legislature:

1. Prepare a letter of support on your City's letterhead addressed to the bill's author (you may use the sample template attached):

The Honorable Anna Caballero
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0028

2. Fax the letter to: (916) 319-2128 or e-mail it (must be on letterhead) to Assemblymember.Caballero@assembly.ca.gov
3. Make sure the letter is submitted prior to June 8, 2009.

To view the complete text of AB715, visit <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html> then look up AB 715.

(Print on City letterhead)

(Date)

The Honorable Anna Caballero
State Capitol, Room 5119
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **AB 715 (Caballero): City Ordinances: Publishing and Posting Requirements**
Notice of SUPPORT

Dear Assemblywoman Caballero:

The City of [REDACTED] is pleased to support AB 715 which authorizes cities to post ordinances on their official Web sites and to mail notice of passage of the ordinance to those who have filed a written request for mailed notices in lieu of publishing the ordinance in the newspaper.

AB 715 improves efficiency in local government and increases citizen participation for the following reasons:

- The newspaper publishing requirement for ordinances was established over 125 years ago. Technology has dramatically transformed the way we communicate. AB 715 would provide immediate online access, 24/7 at the public's convenience.
- Relieves a financial burden for residents who are cutting back on paid newspaper subscriptions. These residents could choose to receive notices of ordinances either by U.S. mail and/or the Internet.
- Relieves a financial burden for cities which are required to pay costly legal advertising rates to publicize ordinances. AB 715 would allow the option of mailing notice to requestors and posting on the city's Web site instead of paid legal advertising.
- Increases citizen participation by streamlining the notification process. Citizens would no longer need to sort through multiple newspaper pages of paid legal advertising for information.

For these reasons the City of [REDACTED] strongly supports your AB 715. If you have any questions regarding the City's position, please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED].

Sincerely yours,

(Name and Title)

cc: Office of Governor Schwarzenegger, Legislative Unit
Chair and Members, Senate Local Government Committee
Chair and Members, Assembly Local Government Committee
Natasha Karl, Legislative Analyst, League of California Cities

The Honorable Anna Caballero
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