



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA CITY OF LONG BEACH

April 14, 2021

The Honorable Richard Pan
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 17 (Pan)—Office of Racial Equity

Dear Senator Pan,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to support SB 17, which would establish a State Office of Racial Equity to recommend ways to expand racial equity across State agencies, departments, and offices.

As the first municipality in Southern California to establish an Office of Equity, the City is committed to advancing racial equity. Originally launched in 2017 in the City's Health Department, the Office of Equity educates and supports City staff, departments, and elected officials to increase equity and ensure all Long Beach residents have the resources they need to thrive. Three cohorts of City staff have participated in training by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, leading to the incorporation of racial equity into key strategic planning documents such as the Economic Development Blueprint, Community Health Needs Assessment, and Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

In response to the tragic death of George Floyd, on May 25, 2020, the Long Beach City Council voted unanimously to adopt a Framework for Reconciliation to engage in a public listening process, internal policy review, and local action plan to advance racial equity in Long Beach. On August 11, 2020, the Long Beach City Council unanimously approved the Racial Equity and Reconciliation Initiative's Initial Report based on an extensive reconciliation process. The process' first step was acknowledging the existence and longstanding impacts of systemic racism in America as a public health crisis. The Office of Equity moved to the Office of the City Manager to uplift racial equity as a City priority and is currently in the implementation phase of the Framework for Reconciliation, which strives to enact cultural and systemic change across all departments. The City is weaving racial equity into the fabric of its operation and encourages the State do the same.

The City supports the use of an equity lens in policy and program design. Establishing a State Office of Racial Equity, as SB 17 proposes, will provide a valuable resource to shape State policy outcomes and improve racial equity for communities across California. Given these reasons, the City supports SB 17.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia".

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District