



# MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

September 14, 2023

The Honorable Ali Sajjad Taj  
President, League of California Cities  
1400 K Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Opposition to Initiative 21-0042A1—The Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act**

Dear President Taj,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write to oppose Initiative 21-0042A1, misleadingly named by its proponents as the “Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act.” This ballot measure would not protect taxpayers or bolster government accountability, but rather would significantly jeopardize cities’ ability to provide essential services and infrastructure for our communities. The City opposes policies that would reduce City revenues, autonomy, and flexibility in financing public services; and on August 15, 2023, the Long Beach City Council voted to oppose this ballot measure.

Initiative 21-0042A1 would have significant negative impacts on the City’s operations and core service delivery, including fire and emergency response, law enforcement, public health, drinking water, sewer sanitation, parks, libraries, affordable housing, and homelessness prevention. In a time when cities are struggling to fund critical services, this initiative would hinder local governments’ ability to serve residents and would cost taxpayers millions in frivolous lawsuits—while significantly delaying and stopping investments in infrastructure and vital services.

Initiative 21-0042A1 threatens the City’s autonomy to finance public services. The League of California Cities estimates that approximately \$2 billion in existing fees and charges, along with \$2 billion in voter-approved measures, will be subject to legal challenge if the measure passes. The proposal would require State and local tax measures to identify the type, amount, and duration of the tax. Tax measures must have an end date, and the proposal prohibits local advisory measures which allow local voters to express a preference for how local general tax dollars should be spent. The proposal undermines voter rights, transparency, and accountability by retroactively cancelling measures that were passed by local voters.

The proposal also includes undemocratic provisions that would make it more difficult for local voters to pass measures needed to fund local services and projects. If enacted, Initiative 21-0042A1 would invalidate the court decision that allows a majority of local voters to pass special taxes, and instead specify that taxes proposed by initiative are subject to the same rules as taxes placed on the ballot by a city council. This proposal does not benefit taxpayers, as alluded by the initiative’s name; in fact, it would hurt taxpayers by diminishing quality of life and minimizing voter input on how tax dollars are spent.

Initiative 21-0042A1 threatens the City’s ability to provide essential services and infrastructure for Long Beach residents, and would make it more difficult for local voters to pass measures needed to fund local services and projects. For these reasons, the City opposes Initiative 21-0042A1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson  
City of Long Beach