

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA MONICA



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Re: City Council Agenda Item 7B

Dear Mayor Himmelrich, Mayor Pro Tem McCowan, and City Councilmembers,

The League of Women Voters of Santa Monica believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. Individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged.

In the last few years, the League of Women Voters has defended the First Amendment as the right to protest has become increasingly threatened. In 2018, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) submitted comments regarding proposed regulations pertaining to the National Park Service's protest permitting process that would have made it harder to have demonstrations at the National Mall, Memorial Parks, and President's Park.

With regard to Agenda Item 7B, a proposed ordinance amending provisions of the Santa Monica Municipal Code related to noise and targeted residential protests, we urge the Council consider the following questions to ensure that the proposed ordinance genuinely meets the needs of the Santa Monica community and does not infringe upon constitutionally protected speech or civil liberties:

- Who will be impacted by these proposed amendments?
- What are the intended and unintended outcomes?
- Do the proposed amendments align with the City's values, particularly with regard to advancing equity and inclusion?
- Is the language of the proposed ordinance in line with its narrowly stated goal of protecting residential privacy and tranquility, while avoiding potential negative impacts to civil liberties?
- Can the issues described by the justification for the proposed ordinance be addressed with existing municipal code?
- Is now the appropriate time for this type of update to our noise ordinance?
- Could the proposed amendments unintentionally result in the targeting of marginalized communities?

We appreciate your careful consideration of the potential impacts of the proposed ordinance in item 7B and look forward to hearing what is sure to be a robust discussion on the matter.

Sincerely,

Natalya Zernitskaya

President

League of Women Voters of Santa Monica