

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: I am providing comment regarding Council File (20-0761) as it relates to the Immigrant Affairs Committee discussing the final name for the Department of Civil and Human Rights, as well as finalizing the placement of the Office of Racial Equity (ORE) within the department. As someone who used to work for the City's Human Relations Commission, and within local city government for almost ten years, I know firsthand that both the Office of Racial Equity and the Civil and Human Rights Commission will be fundamental for the City of Los Angeles being accountable for and addressing the institutional racism and systemic barriers that continue to impact communities of color. Although their approach and focus will be different, both departments are vital, and therefore, should equally be reflected in the final name of this department. I urge you to include the words race, equity, and/or racial equity within the name of the department to ensure that the department's name is inclusive of the Office of Racial Equity as an equal component to the civil and human rights branch. Given that we are living in a time of profound movement in Los Angeles and across the country, centering racial justice is critically important and allows the public and policymakers to ensure that we are indeed creating racially equitable and fair policies and practices. As you move forward in your decision to place the Office of Racial Equity in this department, we urge you to ensure that it gets the adequate resources, staffing, and power needed for the city as a whole to address racial inequities proactively via policy, data collection and analysis, technical assistance and training for all city officials and staff, civic engagement capacity-building for low-income people of color, and community partnerships. I personally saw how the work of the city's Human Relations Commission was dramatically hindered because of lack of resources. This had a direct impact on the city's policymaking because without dedicated staffing and resources, we risk missing important perspectives and political considerations when deciding citywide policy. As such, I urge you to be a leader in the racial justice field by providing this new Department with the power needed to truly hold ourselves and the broader community accountable to doing all that we can to eliminate racial injustice within our structures and institutions. As you know, race is at the intersection for all

groups that face disparities in our city. From houseless families, to immigrants and refugees, to the LGBTQ+ communities, to low-income communities, to people with disabilities, to women, and so much more -- it is people of color within each of these communities that bear the brunt of poverty, lack of housing, lack of economic and educational opportunities, COVID-19 deaths, and injustices by the police. Therefore, many of us see this new Department as a powerful vehicle to not only center civil and human rights with racial equity, but to transform the very policies, practices, and culture of our city government which will make a concrete difference in people's lives in the City of L.A. I thank you in advance for your consideration of these suggestions. Mike de la Rocha Co-Founder, Revolve Impact