

MOTION

BUDGET & FINANCE

As our City deals with a crisis of faith in government, one of the most important tools we have to both hold our government accountable and restore Angelenos' trust is our City Ethics Commission. This Commission is codified in our City Charter, whose language outlines its responsibilities, including "to make recommendations to the Mayor and the Council concerning campaign finance reform, lobbying, governmental ethics and conflicts of interest," "to assist departments in developing their conflict of interest codes," and, perhaps most notably, "to have full charge and control of its office, to be responsible for its proper administration, to submit annually a proposed budget and to expend the funds of the office."


The Ethics Commission has an operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget of \$5,432,708, which funds only 45 staff positions. While the funding for the Matching Funds program is not included in this operating budget, the Ethics Commission has never been provided additional staffing capacity to administer that program. As this Council discusses issues such as Council expansion and the creation of an Independent Redistricting Commission, the Ethics Commission has been invoked countless times as a necessary entity to help support and enforce the processes and regulations this Council is hoping to enact.

City residents deserve to have faith in their municipal government, and a stable, adequately-funded, and independent Ethics Commission would be a significant step in the right direction. The more independently this Commission can operate, the more Angelenos will be able to trust that its actions are un-corrupted. Having a consistent, reliable funding source for the Commission would ensure that we can have the most robust Ethics oversight possible in this City.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) to report on the feasibility of establishing a budgeting process outside of the Mayor's annual budget process, using the Library Department as a potential model, so as to ensure a stable, apolitical funding source for the Ethics Commission, understanding that any change could require Charter reform.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council request the CLA and City Administrative Officer (CAO), in consultation with the Ethics Commission, report on an analysis of the total operating budget necessary for the Commission to effectively and thoroughly carry out its responsibilities, Charter-defined and otherwise, as a result of the additional duties that could be included in the event of an Independent Redistricting Commission and expanded Council.

PRESENTED BY 
EUNISSES HERNANDEZ
Councilmember, 1st District

SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL

SEP 15 2023

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