

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Coalition Letter  
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**Comments for Public Posting:** Letter From: California Clean Money Campaign California  
Common Cause Fair Rep LA League of Women Voters of  
Greater Los Angeles Unrig LA



June 29th, 2026

Los Angeles City Council  
200 N Spring St. Rm. 340  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Oppose Eliminating Meeting Frequency Requirements of Section 242(a)  
Item #93 - [CF 26-1100-S13](#)**

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our strong opposition to the proposal to remove [Charter Section 242\(a\)](#) and eliminate all guardrails that guarantee the City Council hold regular meetings. If passed, the City Council would have the power to decide how often it would like to meet. While there have been varying levels of discussion about reforms to meeting frequency over the last two years, the proposal to remove it was first introduced last month and has yet to receive *any* level of study. Until that can occur, the Charter must maintain a minimum meeting schedule and any reduction in meeting frequency must be offset by additional provisions that enhance public accessibility at City Council meetings.

Trust in LA City Hall has been shattered by waves of scandals. The vague and open-ended nature of the current proposal could serve as a poison pill for both this item and the measure it is packaged within. We respectfully submit the following requests which aim to deliver a measured reduction in meeting frequency that would have actual viability with voters:

**1. Amend the ballot question to accurately reflect what is being proposed.**

The ballot question recommended for presentation to voters is misleading. The measure does far more than “allow the City Council to change its meeting schedule.” The City Council has pre-existing discretion to “change its meeting schedule.” This measure would “allow the City Council to establish its meeting frequency” and the ballot question should be tailored to fairly reflect what is ultimately proposed.

**2. Amend Charter Section 242(a), and defer any consideration of removing it until there can be further study in advance of 2028.**

The Rules Committee made frequent mention of what should and should not be in the charter, and those issues fundamental to our democracy were cast to be in the category of what should

be in the charter. Removing Section 242(a) runs afoul of that principle. Public comment may have its limits, but that opportunity to directly address your elected officials is a fundamental element of local municipal governance. The City of LA is an extreme outlier in the size of our council districts, and that negatively affects opportunities to access an elected official. Time in front of a decision maker is a valuable commodity, \$74 million was spent lobbying LA City Officials [last year](#). Public comment doesn't matter to most of those lobbyists, but it does matter for the general public. The Charter obligates our elected officials to serve full time, and they are well paid for those efforts.<sup>1</sup> This issue cuts to the core of what our representative government looks like, and what our elected officials are paid to do. Removing this section needs further study before it is seriously entertained.

### **3. Amend Charter Section 242(a) to Shift to meeting twice per week**

The current meeting pace indicates that City Council could absorb eliminating one meeting per week without too much disruption to its individual functions, but reducing it any further requires further study. The City Council has previously discussed reducing meetings to once per week like the LA County Board of Supervisors (BOS). There are, however, enormous differences between the types of meetings, infrastructure, and procedures utilized for the two bodies. BOS meetings stretch all day, requiring members of the public to take additional time out of their schedules. The BOS meeting room also has a significantly larger capacity than our Council Chambers. A weekly meeting schedule would either leave residents waiting outside (unless they arrive well in advance) or require us to increase capacity or establish a new overflow procedure.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, the BOS makes a good faith effort to hear from all attendees, while the LA City Council Rules only require a minimum of 30 minutes of comment and they often opt to turn away large swaths of speakers at meetings when they near or exceed capacity.

### **4. Amend Charter Section 242(a) to require at least one evening meeting per month (beginning at/after 6pm).**

The City Council can provide greater accessibility by holding a monthly meeting at a more accessible time than 10am. Sacramento's charter goes so far as to require the City Council to hold a majority of its meetings after 5pm. A [motion](#) was introduced in 2018 seeking to establish a monthly LA City Council meeting that would occur at 5pm or later, but it expired without receiving a hearing.

### **5. Amend Charter Section 242(a) to require agendas be posted 5 days in advance**

As part of the LA County governance reforms passed via Measure G in 2024, the County charter now requires that BOS agendas be posted 120 hours (5 days) in advance instead of the normal 72 hours required under the Brown Act. Adopting a similar requirement would

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<sup>1</sup> The most recent figures provided by the City Clerk place the salary for an LA City Councilmember at \$244727 per year (as of July 1st 2024)

<https://clerk.lacity.gov/elections/municipal-elections/2026-general-information-municipal-candidates>

<sup>2</sup> This would be particularly burdensome for residents who use mass transit to commute to City Hall and/or are commuting from areas of the city located far from City Hall.

ensure members of the public, departments, elected officials, and their staff all have more time to prepare for meetings.

**6. Amend Charter Section 242 to require Councilmembers to be in the publicly visible areas of Council Chambers in order to vote.**

Councilmembers are allowed to be counted as present, and cast votes via the auto-vote system, even if they are completely absent from the publicly visible areas of Council Chambers. They can meet with lobbyists in back rooms, or even hash out amendments with their Council colleagues away from the public eye, all while “present” at the meeting and casting votes. This diminishes the public’s opportunity to address their elected officials and leaves us with an unenforceable standard, as those responsible for monitoring quorum in the room have no easy way to ascertain who has strayed *outside* the the building, as has commonly been seen under this system. This simple change would offer a clearer and more enforceable standard while still allowing the City Council to run efficient meetings with the current vote system.

**7. Commit to implementing additional reforms outside of the Charter reform process.**

There are additional steps that should be taken to accompany a reduction in meeting frequency, but can be addressed through means outside of the charter. These include providing [video](#) of all Council Committee meetings, increasing capacity in Council Chambers and/or creating an overflow room, amending Council Rules to increase the *minimum* public comment period from the current 30 minute per meeting floor, formalizing monthly meetings held outside of LA City Hall (including locations beyond Van Nuys City Hall), and establishing a separate comment period for Neighborhood Council Community Impact Statements as recommended by the Charter Reform Commission.

We have attached a two-page memo from Fair Rep LA which contains additional background on this issue and an overview of how other major cities address meeting frequency ([Link to a spreadsheet with more detailed information](#)).

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

California Clean Money Campaign

California Common Cause

Fair Rep LA

League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles

Unrig LA

## **Meeting the moment, not clearing the calendar**

### ***Charter reform for improved LA City Council meeting frequency, accessibility, and transparency***

On June 17th, 2026, the Los Angeles City Council voted for “further study” of all of the Charter Reform Commission’s recommended governance structure reforms. However, zero study was necessary for Councilmembers to unanimously agree to [ask voters](#) to delete [Charter Sec. 242\(a\)](#), which requires City Council “hold regular meetings at least three days each week.” Up until a month ago, the conversation was confined to changing the number of weekly meetings. This new proposal goes much further in completely removing *all* of the LA City Charter’s meeting requirements.

Convincing voters that Council should have more power over their meetings, and fewer opportunities for public input, will be a tough sell – and on June 4th, 2024, Council seemed to agree. Councilmember Blumenfield stated he was “not ready to vote” for what “could be a poison pill if we put this on the ballot.”<sup>1</sup> Even Councilmembers who led the proposal to reduce meeting frequency noted the need to improve meeting accessibility for working class communities.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, Council voted to send the matter to the Charter Reform Commission. However, while Fair Rep LA presented meeting frequency reform options to the Charter Reform Commission ([see slide 26](#)), the Commission ultimately felt any reduction to Council’s meeting schedule was counter to their mandate to increase accessibility at City Hall.

To give this issue the further study it deserves, and offer Council clear options for improving accessibility and public trust in local government, Fair Rep LA presents the following review of how the 20 most populous American cities and 10 most populous Californian cities address meeting frequency, accessibility, and transparency in their charter. All data presented can be found [here](#).

### **Almost half of large U.S. cities have a council meeting frequency requirement in their charter**

**14 of the 30 cities** we examined had at least some council meeting frequency requirement in their charter: Cities as large as **New York City**, as well as Californian cities like **Oakland** and **Anaheim**, have charter requirements that their Council meet **at least two times per month**.

City charter meeting requirements can also allow flexibility week-to-week. Cities like **Austin, Hartford, Houston, Jacksonville, and Phoenix** required at least one Council meeting a month in their Charter, but held two meetings per month in practice. Others used a yearly minimum, as in the case of **Fort Worth** (44 meetings per year) and **Columbus** (50 meetings per year). Regardless, **city charter meeting frequency requirements are common and useful for ensuring meetings occur regularly**.

### **Los Angeles’s lack of afternoon or evening Council meetings is an outlier among large cities**

Los Angeles’s lack of full Council meetings at publicly accessible times is exceptional: **over three-fourths of large U.S. and Californian cities had at least one afternoon council meeting a month**, including **New York City, Seattle, and San Francisco**. This is especially true of Californian cities, as **four-fifths of other large Californian cities had at least one afternoon meeting** (the exceptions being San Diego and Fresno).

Moreover, **one-half of large U.S. and Californian cities had at least one meeting a month outside of regular work hours**. **Sacramento’s** charter even requires a majority of meetings be held after 5 PM,

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/live/igelp7GFGwQ?si=5or5EqWQLly\\_FsrD&t=16746](https://www.youtube.com/live/igelp7GFGwQ?si=5or5EqWQLly_FsrD&t=16746)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/live/igelp7GFGwQ?si=zxiJZZc5YIA0UDRu&t=16629>

while **San Jose** legally mandates at least one council meeting be held per month after 6 PM. Others like **San Antonio** have weekly sessions at 5 PM entirely dedicated to public comment.

LA is clearly an outlier in its staunch adherence to a meeting schedule that acts as a barrier to the public's ability to attend and participate in meetings. **Any discussion of changes to Council meeting frequency must also address Council meetings' inaccessibility to everyday Angelenos.**

**Many large cities, from San Francisco to Sacramento, have meeting transparency requirements**

Members of the public who participate in public comment frequently note their frustration with addressing Councilmembers who are often engaged in their own conversations or, even worse, are entirely absent from the Council Chambers. Vague rules about what constitutes being "present" in Council chambers allow Councilmembers to be out of public sight, even as LA Council's voting software allows voting to continue automatically. As a result, Councilmembers have a well-documented history of conducting lengthy private meetings in back rooms, holding news conferences, and attending receptions while Angelenos deliver testimony to empty seats.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

Other large cities protect public trust in the integrity of their council meetings by prohibiting such practices. Cities like **Fresno** and **San Francisco** require physical presence in council chambers during a vote. **Sacramento** specifically requires members be physically present *at the dais itself* in order for a vote to be registered. **Oakland** and **Jacksonville**, too, specifically require members be *at their assigned seat* in order to vote.

Some cities, like **Washington, DC** simply prohibit *all* means of voting other than voice vote, while **Long Beach** and others require voice vote for passing ordinances and resolutions. **Chicago** and **Dallas** also explicitly require attendance *throughout* a meeting to be able to vote.

**Los Angeles cannot reform Council meeting frequency without adhering to the common, basic standard of literal transparency, and reforming the rules that keep its members accountable to the public during those meetings.**

**Council should "use our imagination"<sup>6</sup> for meeting reforms that meaningfully improve our city**

Large cities also demonstrate creative ways to enhance transparency and accessibility beyond their legislature. In one example, **San Francisco's** Board of Supervisors requires the mayor to appear at every second monthly meeting to answer Supervisors' questions, facilitating dialogue and accountability (topics are submitted in advance). Further study and discussion of potential approaches to improving meeting accessibility, rather than simply deleting an entire subsection of the Charter, could offer other innovative options for taking action on improving Council meetings.

**As Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson repeatedly said throughout the Council's 2026 Charter reform meetings, "it's better to do it right than fast."<sup>7</sup>** We hope that Councilmembers apply this principle to their own reforms, as well as those proposed by civil society, to ensure Charter changes to Sec. 242(a) are aligned with best practices to benefit our Council's and city's future.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://archive.is/V0EuH>

<sup>4</sup> <https://archive.is/9rHee>

<sup>5</sup> <https://archive.is/NOW7F>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/live/igelp7GFGwQ?si=zxiJZZc5YIA0UDRu&t=16629>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/live/RmocQ9muPOQ?si=erA70mmZPGbJwn1Z&t=9596>