

Communication from Public

Name: Blake Lynch

Date Submitted: 10/04/2024 12:28 AM

Council File No: 24-0867

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Los Angeles City Council, I write in strong opposition to Council File No. 24-0867, which proposes implementing term limits for Neighborhood Council (NC) board members. While ostensibly aimed at fostering fresh leadership, this misguided proposal fails to address the real challenges facing NCs and threatens to undermine the very system it purports to improve. The False Promise of Term Limits Term limits are a blunt instrument that will weaken, not strengthen, our Neighborhood Councils. These volunteer organizations already struggle with recruitment and retention. Forcing out experienced members will:

1. Deprive NCs of hard-earned institutional knowledge
2. Disrupt long-term advocacy efforts
3. Create additional barriers for new members trying to navigate complex city processes

The city's high departmental turnover already forces NC members to frequently restart initiatives with new staff. Adding artificial term limits will only exacerbate this instability. Addressing the Real Issues Instead of imposing term limits, the City Council should focus on:

1. Improving DONE Support: The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) must provide better training, clearer guidance, and more consistent information to NCs. Currently, many councils are frustrated by inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate advice from Neighborhood Empowerment Advocates (NEAs).
2. Targeted Enforcement: If specific individuals are problematic, develop mechanisms to address those cases directly rather than penalizing all NC members with a one-size-fits-all solution.
3. Genuine Engagement: City Council should treat NCs as true partners in local governance, not just when it's politically convenient. Establish regular, meaningful dialogue to empower NCs as the community voice they're meant to be.
4. Resource Allocation : Provide NCs with the tools, funding, and support they need to effectively serve their communities.

A Call for Collaborative Reform Term limits are a superficial fix that ignores the root causes of NC challenges. Instead, I urge the City Council to:

1. Work with NCs to identify and address specific pain points in the current system
2. Invest in comprehensive training, templates, and support programs. The web tutorials are long, boring, and don't address the real problems NCs encounter.
3. Create formal channels for NC input on city decisions, ensuring community voices are heard
4. Develop targeted solutions for any

cases of genuine board member misconduct or abuse of power 5. Reform the Department Of Neighborhood Empowerment with a focus on friendly staff who actually have the capacity to support and empower NCs. By focusing on these substantive reforms, we can create more effective, engaged, and representative Neighborhood Councils without resorting to arbitrary term limits that will ultimately harm the system they're meant to improve. Disclosure: As a current member of a Neighborhood Council, I am submitting this statement in my personal capacity. The views expressed herein are my own and do not represent the official position of my Neighborhood Council.

Dear Los Angeles City Council,

I write in strong opposition to Council File No. 24-0867, which proposes implementing term limits for Neighborhood Council (NC) board members. While ostensibly aimed at fostering fresh leadership, this misguided proposal fails to address the real challenges facing NCs and threatens to undermine the very system it purports to improve.

The False Promise of Term Limits

Term limits are a blunt instrument that will weaken, not strengthen, our Neighborhood Councils. These grassroots organizations already struggle with recruitment and retention. Forcing out experienced members will:

1. Deprive NCs of hard-earned institutional knowledge
2. Disrupt long-term advocacy efforts
3. Create additional barriers for new members trying to navigate complex city processes

The city's high departmental turnover and employee transfers already forces NC members to frequently restart initiatives with new staff. Adding artificial term limits will only exacerbate this instability.

Addressing the Real Issues

Instead of imposing term limits, the City Council should focus on:

- 1. Improving DONE Support:** The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) must provide better training, clearer guidance, and more consistent information to NCs. Currently, many councils are frustrated by inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate advice from Neighborhood Empowerment Advocates (NEAs).
- 2. Targeted Enforcement:** If specific individuals are problematic, develop mechanisms to address those cases directly rather than penalizing all NC members with a one-size-fits-all solution.
- 3. Genuine Engagement:** City Council should treat NCs as true partners in local governance, not just when it's politically convenient. Establish regular, meaningful dialogue to empower NCs as the community voice they're meant to be.
- 4. Resource Allocation :** Provide NCs with the tools, funding, and support they need to effectively serve their communities.

A Call for Collaborative Reform

Term limits are a superficial fix that ignores the root causes of NC challenges. Instead, I urge the City Council to:

1. Work with NCs to identify and address specific pain points in the current system
2. Invest in comprehensive training and support programs
3. Create formal channels for NC input on city decisions, ensuring community voices are heard
4. Develop targeted solutions for any cases of genuine board member misconduct or abuse of power
5. Reform the Department Of Neighborhood Empowerment with a focus on friendly staff who actually have the capacity to support and empower NCs.

By focusing on these substantive reforms, we can create more effective, engaged, and representative Neighborhood Councils without resorting to arbitrary term limits that will ultimately harm the system they're meant to improve.

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Respectfully,

Blake Lynch