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Motion

On May 30, 2025, the Office of the City Clerk approved a referendum petition for circulation against Ordinance No. 188610, seeking to overturn the ordinance to increase wages and healthcare benefits for hotel and airport workers and hotel training. Under City Charter Section 461(a), the petitioners have 30 days from the date of publication (May 29, 2025) to gather the required 92,998 valid signatures from registered voters within the City of Los Angeles.

If 92,998 valid signatures are submitted, the ordinance is suspended until it can be placed on the ballot and approved by the voters at the next scheduled general election in June 2026. However, under current law, the ordinance is also suspended while signatures on the petition are being verified — even if the petition ultimately fails to qualify for the ballot.

This means that if petitioners submit more than 92,998 signatures — but fall short of 92,998 valid signatures because of duplicates, unregistered voters, and residents outside the City of Los Angeles — the minimum wage increase enacted by the Living Wage Ordinance and the Hotel Worker Minimum Wage would still be temporarily frozen, delaying urgently needed raises for thousands of low-wage workers.

Many of the workers who will receive raises because of the updated Living Wage Ordinance and Hotel Worker Minimum Wage are struggling to survive in Los Angeles. A delay of even a few weeks in implementing a wage increase can result in missed rent, food insecurity, and additional economic hardship. It is vital that the City explore all avenues to protect workers from the harms of a procedural delay — especially in the case of a referendum effort that may ultimately fail.

I THEREFOR MOVE to direct the CLA to report to Council within 7 days regarding the estimated loss in wages for workers if the Living Wage and Hotel Worker Minimum Wage increases were to take effect in July 2026 rather than July 2025;

I FURTHER MOVE to direct the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) in coordination with the City Attorney to report to Council within 7 days regarding:

- The recourse that the City and city residents can take if signature gatherers are not truthful with voters.
- The feasibility of requiring back pay to be paid to workers whose wage was delayed during the signature verification period, if the petitioners do not successfully file a referendum petition with 92,998 required valid signatures by the deadline.

PRESENTED BY:

  
 HUGO SOTO-MARTÍNEZ  
 Councilmember, 13<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:



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JUN 06 2025