

Communication from Public

Name: Mariam Moore

Date Submitted: 02/23/2025 11:19 AM

Council File No: 24-0867

Comments for Public Posting: As a former Sun Valley Area NC board member, I strongly opposes the motion presented by Councilwoman Rodriguez. The Los Angeles City Charter establishes NCs as independent. it is inadequate and offensive for the city council to dictate decisions that should only come from the NCs themselves. Moving to tell the Neighborhood Councils how to distribute their board members is for the NCs to decide, not the city council. NC does recognize the need of developing youth participation and increased diversity and leadership growth, but some NCs such as Sun Valley Area NC also acknowledged at the time that they often had trouble filling our existing youth seat, due to the sheer amount of committed time it took to be a member of the council, as well as many restrictions youth members faced. For marginalized communities, such as Sun Valley, getting involved in the NC is not always feasible, as it is an unpaid volunteer position that allots to 20 plus hours a week. Setting term limits for volunteers, is the complete opposite of inclusion as you allege. Councilmember Rodriguez, there are so many urgent and sensitive issues in your district, I would suggest you take the time to actually address these issues and leave the NCs run their business as they were running since 1999 as flawlessly as possible without this unreasonable motion you came up with. These are teams of volunteers who care about their communities and join the NCs for the common good of their communities even without pay. Enough tightening the rope around unpaid volunteers' necks - people committed to their communities and doing it all FOR FREE vs council districts who get paid undisclosed amounts of salary but don't come close to what NCs do for their respective communities. Once again, let the NCs do their UNPAID job, unlike you and your council, they don't get paid but that doesn't keep them from doing a near perfect job, such as the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council. Last but not least, I suggest that instead of spending so much time and attempting to create yet more obstacles for NCs, use your time wisely, come up with a motion to set up a budget to pay salary to NC board members who are wholeheartedly committed advocates to their communities, who are the punching bag of the community, and who have nearly no budget to carry out mountain of tasks dropping on their desk every day? That's food for thought.

Communication from Public

Name: Phyllis Ling

Date Submitted: 02/23/2025 08:46 PM

Council File No: 24-0867

Comments for Public Posting: I am a board member and Chair of the Historic Cultural North NC, sharing this comment in my personal capacity. I am writing to caution against requiring term limits for neighborhood councils. Two main questions: (1) Are the term limits under consideration lifetime term limits, or are they limits to the number of years that a person can serve continuously on the board before having to take a break? If it's the latter type, how long should the break be? (2) Who's going to keep track of board members' terms and enforce the term limits? My NC has an 8 year term limit, after which a board member is required to take a break, but can rejoin the board after an unspecified period of time. This is ostensibly to give others in the community the opportunity to participate in the neighborhood council, which I think is a good thing. My recent experience with enforcement of the term limits, however, suggests that enforcement of term limits needs to be careful thought and planning. Here's what happened. It appears that the City Clerk's Office is in charge of enforcing our term limits. This is because the City Clerk's Office has interpreted the term limits in our bylaws to mean that no person shall run for re-election if they are not eligible to serve the full term of the seat they are seeking. Three of our board members seeking re-election this cycle met that definition. However, the City Clerk's Office certified one of these candidates more than 1 week prior to candidate filing deadline, and then delayed certifying two others who had applied in the final week of candidate filing, and who served on the board during the exact same time. My application was one of the applications that remained "pending" for over a week. They did not notify me that they were reviewing my eligibility due to term limits until after the candidate filing deadline had ended, despite my multiple requests asking if there was a problem with my application. I watched for a week while everyone else got certified within 1-3 days. The result of this delay and mixup was that two of our board seats went unchallenged and automatically went to the only other applicants. I had to file a candidate challenge to correct the certification of the first board member's candidacy, and the result of that is that that seat had no applicants. It will be vacant starting the next term, and filled by a vote of the majority of the board. Given the very controversial issues that are happening in our neighborhoods, this could have a huge impact

on the direction of our neighborhood council. I don't think the City Clerk's Office is ready to enforce term limits on all 99 neighborhood councils. They would need to investigate each board member who is applying for re-election to find out if at some point during their service, they took a break from the board. This has happened in the past on our board, when a board member was removed by DONE for not renewing their code of conduct training despite multiple warnings, the seat was declared vacant, and then board voted them back on to fill the vacancy they had left. I am personally against lifetime term limits for the reasons that many other NCs have raised. These are volunteer positions and there are many people who drop in and out of the system for personal reasons. If the City Council insists on term limits for neighborhood councils, there needs to be good record keeping to keep track of all of the people who are serving and uniform enforcement. Also, in the previous neighborhood council that I served on, term limits were in the bylaws, but not enforced by the neighborhood council or the City Clerk's Office, from what I could tell. When our board decided it was interested in enforcing the term limits, I was given the task as the Secretary of combing through past minutes to determine the length of service for board members, and the results were not definitive because of missing minutes or minutes that didn't list all of the board members who were absent. I don't think neighborhood councils can be expected to keep track of this data and enforce term limits. NCs already have enough administrative work to do.