

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: October 1, 2020

TO: Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso *SMTso* Council File No. 20-0668
Chief Legislative Analyst Assignment No. 20-09-0848

SUBJECT: Redistricting Commission Start-Up Support

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles City Charter requires that district boundaries for the City Council and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board be redrawn every ten years following the decennial U.S. Census (Redistricting). The City Council and LAUSD Board are required to establish separate Redistricting Commissions to develop new boundaries for these districts. With the Census occurring on April 1, 2020, the Charter requires that Redistricting occur prior to the next City elections in March 2022.

The City Council allocated \$2 million in the FY 2020-21 City Budget in order to support the Redistricting Commissions. This report recommends that \$150,000 of that allocation be appropriated to cover the cost of needed equipment and services associated with redistricting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That City Council, subject to approval of the Mayor, appropriate \$150,000 from the "Census 2020 / Redistricting Commission" line item in the Unappropriated Balance Fund No.100-58 to the Council Fund No. 100-28, Account No. 6010 (Office & Administrative Expense) to cover the cost of needed equipment and services associated with redistricting.

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles City Charter requires that district boundaries for the City Council and Los Angeles Unified School District Board be redrawn every ten years following the decennial U.S. Census. With the Census occurring on April 1, 2020, the Charter requires that Redistricting occur prior to the next City elections in March 2022.

The Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) released a report regarding the 2020 Redistricting Process (Redistricting Report) (CF 20-0668) on May 27, 2020. The Redistricting Report outlines the actions necessary to form the Redistricting Commissions, past processes implemented to develop Redistricting plans, deadlines to comply with Charter requirements related to Redistricting, and other matters of concern.


Budget

The Council has historically provided an allocation to cover all costs for both the City Council and LAUSD Redistricting Commissions in order to develop and support their work during the Redistricting process. Each Commission hires its own staff, including an executive director to lead their work program. The offices established to support each Commission require computers, equipment and furniture, software, and other supplies. In addition, each Commission retains consultants to provide specialized studies and other services, as well as to draw boundaries. In addition, the Commissions hold public hearings across the City, incurring costs associated with facility rental. In 2011, the Council allocated \$1.5 million to cover all costs for both Commissions.

The City Council approved modifications to the FY 2020-21 City Budget (CF 20-0600) on July 1, 2020, resulting in an allocation of \$2 million for the "Census 2020 / Redistricting Commission."

Redistricting Commission Start-Up Support

The Information Technology Agency and the CLA have identified the computer equipment needed to support the Commissions in their work program. This equipment will support the Commissions in their work program to develop district boundaries and to enable online solutions for both the public and the Commissions to develop new district maps. Due to product shortages and delivery delays associated with COVID-19, it is essential that an order for this equipment be placed at the earliest possible date. It is recommended that \$150,000 be appropriated from the "Census 2020 / Redistricting Commission" line item in the Unappropriated Balance Fund No. 100-58 to the Council Fund No. 100-28, Account No. 6010 (Office and Administrative Expense) to cover the cost of needed supplies and services associated with redistricting.



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