

MOTION

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California State Government Code Section 53069.7 states that local agencies may:

offer and pay a reward, the amount thereof to be determined by the local agency, to any person who comes to the aid of any peace officer of the local agency or who furnishes information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons killing or assaulting with a deadly weapon or inflicting serious bodily harm upon a peace officer of the local agency while such officer is acting in the line of duty.

Sec. 19.122 of the City Administrative Code pertains to the City's Special Reward Trust Fund. Section (c) defines a reward as an authorized payment of monetary compensation to a person or persons for:

1. Information received by the City leading to the determination of the identity and apprehension of a person or persons whose willful misconduct has resulted in injury or death to a person or persons, or who has willfully damaged or destroyed any property; or
2. Coming to the aid of a City of Los Angeles police officer, or for the furnishing of information to the City leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons who killed, assaulted with a deadly weapon, or inflicted serious bodily harm upon a police officer of the City while that officer was acting in the line of duty.

What is not clear is what remedy the City has in cases where LAPD officers are killed, assaulted with a deadly weapon or serious bodily harm is inflicted on them while they are *not* acting in the line of duty but instead at home, traveling or otherwise about. In cases where the motive of assailants is not known the possibility that officers are being targeted due to their involvement in law enforcement, makes a City response necessary.

Two recent examples of such possible retaliation have occurred on the East side of the County. The first was the August 2, 2009 shooting of Sheriff's Deputy Juan Abel Escalante, who was killed outside his Cypress Park home in a predawn attack as he prepared to go to work at the Men's Central Jail in downtown Los Angeles. Two suspected gang members have been charged in the case, but no motive has been disclosed.

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On Saturday, January 31 LAPD officer Anthony Razo wound up in critical condition after an altercation with two teens, one of whom wrestled with Razo while the other shot him with Razo's own gun, which had fallen to the ground during the struggle with the accomplice. Razo was on his way to play a round of golf and the youths' motivation is not known.

In cases such as these, there is a need to quickly identify and bring those responsible to justice. As officers of the law, our LAPD and Sheriff's deputies help keep all Angelenos safe and it is in everyone's interest to ensure that those responsible do not escape justice. Whether they are on duty or not, in the City or elsewhere, boundaries should make no difference.

LAPD officers have the authority to execute a warrant anywhere in the United States. So too we should extend the protections to them beyond the City's boundaries when they are in uniform to when they are at home since criminals do not respect notions such as being "off duty" and may be taking advantage of the fact that officers are easier to assault at home.

Los Angeles is one of 88 cities in the County of Los Angeles, which governs many unincorporated areas that are adjacent to the City. Criminals do not respect invisible political boundaries and we should take attacks on Sheriff's deputies and other cities' law enforcement personnel very seriously. For this reason, the Council authorized a reward for the killing of Deputy Juan Abel Escalante. We should do the same for Anthony Razo.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney be requested to prepare and present an ordinance which would allow the City to offer rewards for information that helps catch individuals who assault or shoot LAPD officers while off duty, wherever they might be.

PRESENTED BY: _____


JOSE HUIZAR
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY: _____


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