



JOSÉ HUIZAR
COUNCILMEMBER OF THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 15th, 2007

CONTACTS: George I. Gonzalez (213) 473-5807
Cell (213) 200-9974

COUNCILMEMBER JOSE HUIZAR CALLS FOR TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR ASSAULTS ON LAPD OFFICERS

Assaults and Shootings Against LAPD Increased 39% In 2007

LOS ANGELES— Councilmember José Huizar introduced a motion to the Los Angeles City Council yesterday calling for tougher penalties for individuals who assault LAPD officers. Recent crime data shows an alarming increase in the number of assaults against police officers. In the first half of 2007, LAPD registered 56 assaults against police officers, representing an increase of 39% compared to last year. In seventeen of those incidents, the officer had been shot or shot at, representing a 42% increase in such crimes.

"I strongly believe that the City's preeminent responsibility is to ensure the safety of its residents. In order to do so, we need to support the police officers walking the streets of Los Angeles on a daily basis. This increase in assaults and shootings against police officers is very alarming. That is why I called for a review of existing penalties for assaulting or causing bodily harm to a police officer, and a determination of whether those penalties can and should be enhanced," said Councilman Huizar.

"The City of Los Angeles has experienced five straight years of dropping crime rates. To date, homicides are down 20.9 percent, and gang homicides are down 28.7 percent compared to last year. Such progress is a testament to the tenacity and skill of our men and women in uniform," added Councilman Huizar.

"Each day the men and women of the Los Angeles Police Department put their lives on the line to protect and serve the people of Los Angeles. That some would target officers and try to hurt or even kill them is unconscionable. The LAPD appreciates any help and support the members of the City Council can give to reduce the violence directed at police officers," said Chief of Police William Bratton.

"A city cannot be safe if it doesn't value the safety of its law enforcement officers. We applaud Councilmember Huizar's motion and hope that our community leaders will give more support to law enforcement as well-- to help spread a message in LA that our police officers are keeping our communities safe for all of Los Angeles' residents," said Raymond Espinoza, Treasurer of the Los Angeles Police Protective League.



JOSÉ HUIZAR
COUNCILMEMBER OF THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

"LAPD officers put their lives on the line every day, and anyone who assaults an officer should pay dearly for that crime," said Councilman Weiss, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

###