

09-2214

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

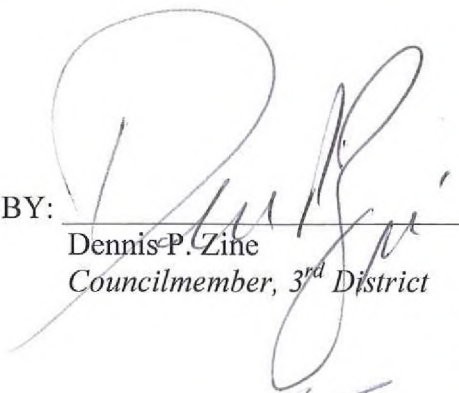
The still-burning Station Fire and other recent wildfires across the greater Los Angeles area have highlighted the importance of reliable communications networks in times of emergency. When faced with looming evacuation orders, quickly changing fire conditions, and limited access to television and the internet, impacted residents often turn to radio news for the information they depend on. The residents of Los Angeles must have access to breaking news in crisis situations, and radio stations are a dependable source.

In the case of the most recent firestorm, however, many radio stations' coverage of important emergency news was severely lacking. Los Angeles' all-news radio stations did not consistently monitor the fires. Even in the midst of a natural disaster, the stations continued to air non-essential programming. Critical information was instead provided by another station, KFI, which broadcasted continuous coverage of the fires from its studios and on-scene.

The City, County, and other local government agencies should have cooperative agreements in place with news radio stations to disseminate life-saving information to residents as quickly as possible. When necessary, regular programming should be preempted by vital updates from public safety agencies. The recent wildfires have shown that such a relationship between government and the radio news media may not be as seamless as it should be.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst, in consultation with the Emergency Management Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Information Technology Agency, and any other relevant departments, report to the City Council with a proposal to guarantee the availability of dependable and up-to-the-minute all-news radio service during natural disasters and other emergencies, including a plan to create voluntary cooperation agreements between City, County, and local government agencies and area radio stations, for the benefit of the public.

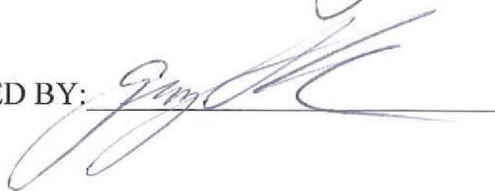
PRESENTED BY:



Dennis P. Zine
Councilmember, 3rd District

SEP 4 2009

SECONDED BY:



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