



NEWS RELEASE

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COUNCILMEMBERS PACHECO, PADILLA DIRECT CITY TO SAFEGUARD RESIDENTS AGAINST CIVIL RIGHTS ABUSES BY I.N.S., OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

LOS ANGELES -- A motion by Councilmembers Nick Pacheco and Alex Padilla instructing the City's negotiating team to work with the Department of Justice on preventative measures to deter federal law enforcement misconduct and civil rights abuses was approved by the City Council unanimously today.

"As we seek to bring positive reforms to the Los Angeles Police Department, we must also hold other law enforcement agencies to the same high standards to ensure that the civil rights of our residents will be protected," said Councilmember Pacheco.

"It is incumbent upon the federal government to prevent future abuses and misconduct by federal personnel, including those in the I.N.S. and the F.B.I.," said Councilmember Padilla.

One immigrant, Jorge-Sisco Aguilar, maintained he had been framed by Rampart officers on a federal gun charge, and was tried in federal court based on his immigrant status. Despite contradictory testimony by two Rampart officers, a federal prosecutor continued to pursue the case. One of the two arresting officers was himself arrested in April 2000 as part of the Rampart investigation.

Councilmembers Pacheco and Padilla participated in a conference call Monday morning with U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to discuss the motion. Attorney General Reno indicated she would investigate the matter further.

The City of Los Angeles' negotiating team and the participating representatives of the U.S. Department of Justice are expected to resume talks later this week once the City Council has reviewed specific items included in a proposed agreement.

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