

## **Lobbyists Must Tell Neighborhood Councils of Clients' Interests**

The Los Angeles City Council on June 1 approved an ordinance that requires lobbyists to identify themselves in written communications they send to any of the 97 neighborhood councils throughout the city.

The law is designed to address concerns that members of neighborhood councils are sometimes unaware that some advocates they encounter have been paid to represent a client.

“If we want to truly continue to empower our neighborhood councils, this is a piece of information that they need to have when they’re evaluating projects, when they’re evaluating development issues, when they’re evaluating anything that impacts our neighborhoods,” said 15th District City Councilmember **Janice Hahn**. “They need to know when they read things where it comes from, who sent it and the possible motive behind that kind of information.”

The ordinance will require written communications from lobbyists—including letters, faxes, electronic messages and fliers—to contain a legible disclaimer identifying the name of the lobbyist and client paying for the communication.

Anyone who earns \$4,000 in a calendar quarter for efforts to influence municipal legislation, which can include matters before a neighborhood council, must register as a lobbyist with the City Ethics Commission. Lobbyists must publicly disclose their lobbying activities each calendar quarter.

There are several neighborhood councils in operation in and around the Downtown area, including the Downtown Neighborhood Council, the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council, the Pico-Union Neighborhood Council, the Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council, the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council and the Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council.

The proposed ordinance now goes to Los Angeles Mayor **James K. Hahn** for his signature or veto. The mayor will likely act on the ordinance sometime this month.