



*Sacramento Area Black Caucus, Inc.
P.O. Box 5528
Sacramento, California 95817*

October 27, 2009

Sacramento Charter Review Committee
New City Hall
915 I St, 1st Floor -Council Chamber
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Members of the Committee:

The Sacramento Area Black Caucus (SABC) has undertaken a consideration of the major questions under review by the Committee. On the basis of our deliberations we offer the following observations and recommendations.

Observations

1. The conceptions underlying the Charter are rooted in a reform movement arising in the early years of the 20th century, and in the case of Sacramento, applying to a much smaller and more homogenous city than we currently inhabit. Those conceptions do not apply to the city today and may be more of an impediment to effective governance than an asset. Adjustments made to the Charter in the last decades of the twentieth century properly took such changes in demographics and orientation into account. We should do no less today.
2. Given the demographic changes since the last major structural changes in the City Charter the current review is warranted and timely.
3. Given the extensive authority the Charter bestows upon an unelected official, the City Manager, in a large, complex, and diverse city, structural and procedural adjustments should be made to enable the electorate to select the authorities who exercise the city's most significant powers and subsequently enable the electorate to hold those officials accountable.
4. The changes made to the City Charter which instituted a district system for the election of geographical areas to the Council and an at-large system for the election of the Mayor to the Council, as well as changes which instituted a wider scope to the office of City Council members, have made the city government more representative of its heterogenous population.
5. In changing the City Charter, no favor is done the city's residents by replacing an over-concentration of power in the City Manager's office with an over-concentration of power in the Mayor's office.

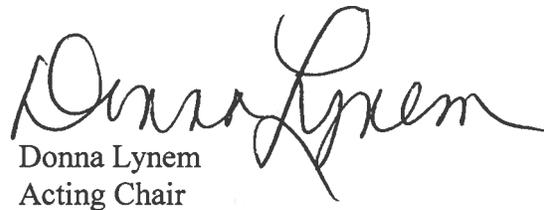
SABC

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Recommendations

1. That there be no separation of the Mayor's office from the City Council. *i.e.*, that the Mayor remain a member of the City Council.
2. That the major powers of appointment and dismissal of major department heads now resident in the City Manager's office be moved to the Mayor's office accompanied by a requirement for approval by a majority of the other members of the City Council.
3. That appointment to City Council and Joint Authority boards, commissions, and similarly appointed positions continue to be a function of the full council.
4. That the Mayor be authorised to present a budget for the approval of the full Council.
5. That the offices of Mayor and district-elected City Council members be full-time positions.
6. That no term-limits be imposed on election to the City Council .

For the Sacramento Area Black Caucus,



Donna Lynem
Acting Chair