



# PRESS RELEASE

## Court Filings Challenge Fire Union's 15-month Delay in Election Lawsuit

**Downey, CA, February 26, 2014:** Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Luis Lavin set an expedited hearing this morning to swiftly resolve the Fire Union's claim that the 15-month-old ballot title and summary, used by the Union to place a Charter Amendment on the ballot, was misleading. Judge Lavin declined to act as the Fire Union and others had requested in their lawsuit against the City.

In the City's preliminary response to the lawsuit, the officials pointed out that:

- The Fire Union is a co-sponsor of the Charter Amendment as part of its longstanding efforts to contract out the fire services.
- The proposed Charter Amendment deletes the requirement that the City provide police and fire services with its own staff and also deletes the requirement that the Council obtain two-thirds voter approval before contracting out (just as the City Attorney's title and summary stated)
- For more than fifteen months, since October 3, 2012, the Fire Union attorneys have had the opportunity to raise objections to the title and summary, and still they have not followed the legally-defined process for objecting. In fact, the Fire Union used that title and summary to obtain signatures to place the Charter Amendment on the ballot.

Mayor Fernando Vasquez expressed his concerns, stating, "It is incredibly unfortunate that in addition to the hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars being spent on this election, now even more public money will be wasted on responding to this lawsuit when the City Council is simply fulfilling a core Downey value to provide police and fire services with City staff."

Because of the community's interest and questions about all city documents relating to the Charter amendment, the City Clerk will be expanding her Election website to include additional City documents of public interest, including all pleadings in this case.

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