



For Immediate Release

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Academics, Good Government Groups Urge Action on LA City Governance Reforms

City Council must pass reforms proposals by mid-June and finalize wording by early July to make November 2024 ballot

Los Angeles – A coalition of academics and good government groups is urging the Los Angeles City Council to take immediate action on key governance reforms aimed at boosting transparency and equity. The City Council faces a tight deadline of mid-June to approve the proposals for the November ballot, leaving little time to address critical issues like redistricting and ethics.

Combining rigorous academic inquiry with extensive community input, the Los Angeles Governance Reform Project (LAGRP) is concluding its formal work with the release today of its final report that makes the following recommendations:

- Establishing an Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) for both the City Council and LAUSD.
- Reducing the size of City Council and LAUSD districts by increasing their number.
- Strengthening the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission.

"As we reflect on the progress that has been made on reform, we look to the leadership of our partners at Common Cause and OUR LA to carry forward the vision of a more transparent and equitable governance system for Angelenos," said Ange-Marie Hancock, co-chair of LAGRP. "Their leadership will be crucial in ensuring these vital reforms come to fruition."

While the City Council has approved placing an Independent Redistricting Commission for the City Council on the ballot, and recently passed procedural votes for ethic reforms and an IRC for the LAUSD, no debate has occurred on district size. The City Council must approve reforms by mid-June and finalize the measure's wording by the first week of July to secure a place on the November 2024 ballot.

"Time is of the essence to get these crucial reforms before the voters in November," added Gary Segura, co-chair of the Los Angeles Governance Reform Project (LAGRP). "The City Council deserves credit for moving pieces of reform forward. The Council's swift and comprehensive action on reform can pave the way for a more accountable government that is responsive to the needs and concerns of its citizens."

California Common Cause and OUR LA have been instrumental in shaping the public discourse on governance reform in Los Angeles.

"It has been nearly two years since the leaked audio exposed the racist actions of the LA City Council, and the Council must act now if they hope to rebuild trust with communities of color," said Aaron Robertson, Director of Political Voice at Catalyst California and part of the OUR LA coalition. "Their actions to date have fallen short the meaningful change that was promised in

the wake of the leaked audio. More must be done to enact structural changes needed to realize a more racially equitable Los Angeles."

"We are committed to strengthening and expanding ethics reforms in the City of Los Angeles," said Russia Chavis Cardenas, voting rights and redistricting program manager for California Common Cause. "It is imperative that the City take swift action to implement meaningful reform to ensure Angelenos have a local government truly worthy of their trust."

Moving forward, Common Cause and OUR LA will continue to educate the public on the benefits of these reforms. The partnership also will include ongoing expertise from LAGRP leadership team members regarding its research and its most effective application, including testimony and presentations.

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About California Common Cause

California Common Cause is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to building a democracy that includes the voices of all of California's communities. We work on voting rights, redistricting reform, government transparency, money in politics, and other democracy issues with the goal of ending structural inequities in our state and local democracies and creating governments at all levels that are accountable to and reflective of all Californians. Learn more at <https://www.commoncause.org/california/>.

About the LA Governance Reform Project

The Los Angeles Governance Reform Project (LAGRP) brings together academics and researchers, from across the region to develop independent governance reform proposals that will advance a more transparent, accountable, and community-driven City of Los Angeles municipal government. The LAGRP's mission is to produce independent nonpartisan reform recommendations informed by research and practice that inform the policy-making process and broader civic and community engagement.

To maintain the independence of this project, this work is being funded entirely by private philanthropy, including the California Community Foundation, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and the Weingart Foundation. Learn more at <https://www.lagovreform.org/>.

About the OUR LA Coalition

OUR LA is a multiracial, multi-generational, multi-issue, and intersectional coalition of community-based organizations and racial justice advocates committed to community voice, multiracial solidarity, power-building, racial equity, structural reform, and transparency. Learn more at <http://www.ourla.org>.