



Staff Report

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES GRASSROOTS REGIONAL NETWORK

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

This is an information item. No City Council Action is required.

The League of California Cities “Grassroots Regional Network,” created in 2001 by a vote of the League member cities, is up for a renewal vote Saturday September 8th at the League conference in Sacramento. As the voting member representing Belmont, I plan to vote in favor of renewal. I will report the outcome of the vote from 478 California Cities Tuesday night at our Council meeting.

Background

In just five years, the Grassroots Regional Network (GRN) has become an integral part of the League’s efforts to restore and protect local control for California cities. This innovative program put 15 Regional Representatives on the ground across the state to bring the presence and impact of cities to bear on the legislative process and statewide ballot measures. The regional representative in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties is Rebecca Elliot. The passage of Prop. 1A in 2004 to protect local revenues and the defeat of Prop. 90 in 2006 that would have eroded local land use powers are two of the many accomplishments made possible due to the Network.

The Network was established for an initial seven years through a direct vote of cities in 2001, and a vote of the membership on whether to continue the Network is required by the League bylaws to take place in 2007. That vote is upon us and scheduled for September 8, 2007 at the General Assembly of the Annual Conference in Sacramento.

From the outset, city leaders understood the sizable role the Network would have in executing the League’s mission. However, the League also committed to an independent assessment every few years of how well this new program served League members. The third survey in five years of member satisfaction with the League and the Network has just been completed by the firm of APCO Insight. Early findings show that the program is making a substantial difference. For example, compared to five years ago (prior to the GRN), 84 percent of respondents felt that their efforts on pending legislation and state budget issues have become more effective.

Discussion

Accomplishments

In the final analysis, the success of the Grassroots Regional Network results from the combined efforts of city officials across the state who are supported and coordinated by the 15 Regional Representatives. Together they have provided critical support on important legislative issues as well as ballot measures. A few highlights of the accomplishments of the Network since 2001 are:

- Strengthened Partnerships and Increased Participation
- Prevented Cuts in City Funding Since 2001
- Protected Local Land Use Authority From Legislative Intrusion
- Passage of Proposition 1A, Protecting Local Revenues from State Raids
- Defeat of Proposition 90, Protecting Local Land Use Authority
- Passage of Infrastructure Bonds, Including \$1 Billion In Direct City Street Funds
- Successful CITIPAC Fundraising in Support of Ballot Measure Advocacy

Conclusion

All cities will have the chance to participate in the decision to continue the League's and cities' investment in the Grassroots Regional Network.

General Plan/Vision Statement

Quality of life in all California Cities is better today than it otherwise would be had the Grassroots Regional Network not been created. This is so primarily because revenue subventions from the State of California would undoubtedly be less had Statewide proposition 1A not passed. The Grassroots Regional Network played a major role in this accomplishment.

Fiscal Impact

League dues total \$ 9,256 for the City of Belmont in 2007.

The Grassroots Regional Network cost is not broken out separately on the League invoice, but when the program began six years ago, cities voted to increase their dues by 40% with a renewal vote to be taken this year. Renewing the program will not trigger another dues increase, however, as the GRN would just continue on as a permanent League program.

Public Contact

Posting of City Council agenda

Recommendation

This is an informational report. No City Council action is required.

Respectfully submitted,

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