



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO TRAVEL
FOR MAYOR SAM
LICCARDO**

DATE: June 1, 2022

Approved:

Date: June 1, 2022

Recommendation:

Authorize travel, accept travel payments to the City of San José, and designate Mayor Liccardo as the City representative to Doha, Qatar to participate in a mayoral delegation organized and funded by the State of Qatar from June 9 – 14, 2022.

Location: Doha, Qatar

Meeting Dates: June 10 – June 13, 2022

Source of Funds: Costs associated with transportation, accommodations, and meals will be paid for by the State of Qatar.

Purpose:

The Embassy of the State of Qatar in Washington, DC has organized a special mayoral delegation with the mayors of Detroit, Michigan, Arlington, Texas, and Bryan Barnett, the President of the U.S. Mayor's Conference to learn about the State of Qatar. I would represent the City of San José.

I have specifically sought to learn more about the State of Qatar's work in addressing water scarcity, and in particular the work of the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) in desalination—particularly in a low-energy approach to desalination known as “multi-effect distillation,” and in reverse osmosis. They have also made substantial progress in groundwater recharge of their recycled water, an ambition of the City's from many years ago.

The delegates would attend to learn more about the Qatari national vision, economic development and planning ahead of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Qatar is a constitutional

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emirate, and draws a substantial portion of its legal structure from Islamic law, so one does not expect to find American-style legal protections for women's rights or religious expression, for example. Yet the country has become an increasingly prominent ally of the West, demonstrating leadership among Arab Muslim nations for social, educational, and economic opening. Its Al Jazeera Media Group has promoted greater transparency throughout the Arab world, Doha houses six prominent American universities, and Qatari women enjoy far greater progress in voting rights, political leadership, education, and career than their peers in neighboring nations. Qatar has a recent history of actively opposing autocratic governments in such nations as Libya, Syria, and Bahrain, and it has hosted negotiations to resolve longstanding disputes among warring parties in Afghanistan.