



COUNCIL AGENDA: 8/25/2020
FILE: 20-947
ITEM: 3.7

Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sylvia Arenas
District 8

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: August 25, 2020

Approved

Date

Sylvia Arenas

8/25/2020

SUBJECT: PROPOSITION 16 ON THE NOVEMBER 3, 2020 CALIFORNIA GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt recommendations from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmember Carrasco, and Councilmember Peralez, the solo memo from Vice Mayor Jones, and staff recommendation.
2. Contingent to the passage of Proposition 16 in November 2020, direct the City Manager to conduct an analysis of diversity in our city employment and bring recommendations to Council that update city hiring policies to address historic inequities.

BACKGROUND

Proposition 16 presents our community with a historic opportunity to reverse almost three decades of stalled progress in equity in education, small business contracting, and employment in the State of California. That's why I was proud to introduce a rules memo in June to bring this item to council today.

Proposition 209 was part of a string of reactionary policies pushed through California's ballot measure system in the 90s focused on stopping the progress made in our state in the civil rights era. It has taken us over twenty years to get to this moment. In 2018, California voters revoked Prop 227, which had banned bilingual education for a generation – and now we have the opportunity to reverse Prop 209.

This is an essential opportunity for our community. Communities of color continue to face discrimination and disparity in education, housing, health, and more. Despite the increase in California's Latino population, they remain heavily underrepresented in government jobs, and the amount of Black state workers has decreased since 1996 while the number of non-minority males increased, especially in executive leadership positions.

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I applaud the memo from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmember Carrasco, and Councilmember Peralez to adopt staff memo, as well as the memo from Vice Mayor Jones to update our contracting policies to create opportunity for disadvantaged businesses in our community. Additionally, it's vital that we look in – and address the missed opportunities to provide opportunity for advancement in our city government. San Jose's diverse communities should be fully represented in their government and our hiring practices should open the door of opportunity.

I urge my council colleagues to join groups including the San José Small Business Advisory Task Force, the Asian Law Alliance, the California NAACP, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, the Anti-Defamation League, Working Partnerships USA, Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, Assemblymember Ash Kalra, the entire Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, and all those who have put out statements of support of this important legislation.

Let's put our Equity Pledge into action, by taking this opportunity to speak to San Jose residents about the importance of this moment, and state plainly where we stand as leaders.