

Claimant: Van Le

Address:

Phone/Email:

To:

Office of the City Clerk

City of San José

200 East Santa Clara Street

San José, CA 95113

1. Claimant's Name and Address

Van Le

2. Occurrence or Transaction Giving Rise to the Claim

On April 4, 2025, Councilmember Bien Doan's Chief of Staff, Jonathan Fleming, issued and disseminated a written letter to the East Side Union High School District Board and local media outlets. This letter falsely mischaracterized my role in the 2024 Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, implying that I had misused my elected position as a school board trustee.

In addition:

- On April 8, 2025, Mr. Fleming personally appeared at an ESUHSD Board meeting and read the defamatory accusations aloud, escalating the reputational harm.
- The letter also dragged in my husband and my niece, who was the festival's event coordinator.
- My niece submitted two formal apology requests (April 18 and June 25, 2025), both of which were ignored by the City Attorney, Mayor's Office, and City Council.
- Despite the East Side Union High School District publicly clarifying that I acted solely as a private citizen and volunteer, the City refused to correct the harm.
- The City Attorney and City Clerk further obstructed public records requests (CPRA) by failing to provide requested private emails and text messages, even after multiple follow-up requests, while selectively releasing screenshots to media outlets.

3. Circumstances and Grounds for the Claim

These acts by Councilmember Doan's office, and the subsequent inaction by the City Attorney and City Clerk, constitute:

- Defamation and false public accusations
- Retaliation and political targeting

- Negligence and abuse of authority
- Obstruction of public records access (CPRA violations)
- Failure to take corrective action despite formal requests
- Infliction of emotional distress on myself and my family

The actions taken were outside the proper scope of official duties and appear politically motivated, designed to damage my reputation, silence my community participation, and interfere with my professional standing.

4. Description of Injury, Damage, or Loss

As a direct result of the above misconduct, I suffered:

- Reputational harm within the community and media
- Public humiliation and emotional distress, including distress to my husband and niece
- Loss of credibility and opportunities in both civic and professional settings
- Financial damages, including time, resources, and out-of-pocket costs required to defend against false allegations and pursue records
- Damage to the cultural integrity of the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, a community event I co-founded and have served for decades

5. Names of Public Employees Causing the Injury

- Councilmember Bien Doan
- Jonathan Fleming, Chief of Staff to Councilmember Doan
- Nora Frimann, San José City Attorney (by omission and failure to act)
- Toni Taber, City Clerk of San José (by obstruction and failure to provide records)

6. Amount of Damages Claimed

At this time, I claim \$100,000 in damages for reputational, emotional, and financial harm. I expressly reserve the right to amend this amount or seek greater damages in a civil action.

7. Claimant's Signature

Van Le: 

Date: 09/29/2025