



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SACRAMENTO
COUNTY**

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June 22, 2010

Sacramento City Council
New City Hall
915 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Council Members and Mayor Johnson:

As many of you are aware, the League of Women Voters studied the Sacramento City Charter over a five month period last fall. We interviewed council members, former mayors and a variety of others; we reviewed hundreds of pages of literature and articles about the form of City Government and attended a number of public meetings, including the City Charter Review Committee meetings.

Although a number of citizens spoke at these meetings, we did not see a ground swell of public opinion for changing the form of City Government nor did we see any identification of the specific problems which would be solved by changing the form of government.

Based on our study, we did not favor changing the form of government of the City. Our rationale was and is that Sacramento is a city of neighborhoods better suited to a collaborative form of government.

Nevertheless we concluded, in our study, that it is reasonable for a city to change its form of government only when there is a clear body of evidence that shows there are structural problems which can be solved by altering the form of government and that such change will address demonstrated problems.

No such body of evidence has been gathered or presented as of today, nor is there any evidence whatever problems city government may have will be solved by altering the form of government. Until an appropriate examination of what the problems are and how they can be solved is conducted, with full participation of all segments of the community, including residents of all neighborhoods of the City, it is premature to draft a ballot proposal for revision of the city charter.

You had a Charter Review Committee which studied the charter and did not agree that it was time to revise the charter in the manner proposed. Since it did not come out with the desired result the proponents of changing the charter are hoping you will ignore their findings and move ahead anyway.

We are aware that a group under the aegis of the mayor has drafted an "accountability proposal" and wants it to move ahead. They have organized, selected a person to conduct the campaign and raised money. The whole community needs to be involved, not just a selected group with vested interests.

As we have seen in California those with money have a great chance of rolling over those without money and winning elections, regardless of the merits of the candidates or proposals. Let us be sure that any proposed revision of the charter is based on true problems and reasonable solutions to those problems.

We urge the council not to rush into putting a proposal on the ballot without sufficient study. Your charter review committee did not recommend changing the form of government in this way. It is time to slow down and give the citizens a chance to know what is the problem and how should it be solved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lola Acosta". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Lola Acosta, President