



CITY of CALABASAS

JAMES R. BOZAJIAN  
Mayor pro Tem

July 27, 2020

Dear Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

I write to urge you not to place a County Charter Amendment to eliminate funding for public safety on the General Election ballot this year. I do so for three separate reasons.

1. First and foremost, I strongly object to the manner in which this proposal is being considered. This legislation was unveiled by the Board and brought forward to the public at, quite literally, the last minute. It initially appeared as a supplemental item added to your agenda only one week ago. As such, you offered no way for the public to properly consider and comment upon a highly significant and consequential matter. Absent an emergency, treating important legislation like this lacks transparency; is offensive to the principles of open and democratic governance; and should automatically disqualify it from being approved.

2. Second, seeking to budget by voter initiative sets a dangerous precedent. Budgeting should be a thoughtful, deliberative, and fluid process. As the legislative body empowered with controlling the County's operating budget, the Board of Supervisors retains full authority to accomplish precisely what the measure calls for if desired. But by having voters enact these permanent restrictions, the Board would forever surrender the flexibility to modify future budgets to accommodate changing priorities or circumstances. As such, this legislation promotes a deeply flawed system that would cripple the County's ability to effectively respond to any unanticipated crisis or emergency.

3. Third, I oppose the proposal on substantive grounds. Making deep, across-the-board cuts to law enforcement would substantially imperil public safety in Los Angeles County. Moreover, the motivation here appears to be solely political. The Board has failed to study or consider the potential consequences of its actions in any meaningful fashion. Notably, the most negative impacts would likely be inflicted upon those very communities the Board purportedly seeks to assist.

As an elected public official for 23 years, and having worked in the area of law enforcement for most of my career, I am strongly opposed to this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Mayor Pro Tem, City of Calabasas

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