

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICES OF COUNCILMEMBERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNCIL SOUNDS THE CALL FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDING

With a unified voice, the Los Angeles City Council today encouraged the County Board of Supervisors to place a measure on the November 2004 ballot instituting an additional ½-cent sales tax that would be dedicated to augmenting public safety in Los Angeles County. The Council's leadership team of Council President Alex Padilla, President Pro Tem Cindy Miscikowski, and Assistant President Pro Tem Eric Garcetti, with great enthusiasm from Councilmember Tom LaBonge, have led the charge for the ballot measure, calling the additional funds crucial to making Los Angeles the safest big city in America.

"This measure is absolutely vital so that Los Angeles may continue to ensure the safety of its residents," said Council President Padilla. "More police on the street, in conjunction with gang intervention and prevention programs, will go a long way toward reducing violent crime in our neighborhoods."

"This is a major step forward in addressing the regional public safety needs of Los Angeles County," said Councilmember Miscikowski. "It will provide critical resources for our continuing efforts to protect and serve our neighborhoods."

"We have the opportunity in Los Angeles to create a city that's safe enough to attract economic development and job creation, or that's safe enough for every child to get a great education," said Councilmember Eric Garcetti. "I believe we, the voters, are ready to make that choice, and I look forward to the Supervisors placing it before us."

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca, who has campaigned relentlessly for the ballot measure, was on hand to answer questions about the ballot measure. "I'm grateful for the support and leadership shown by this City Council," said Sheriff Baca. "The additional revenues from this initiative are vital for strengthening public safety, homeland security, and local anti-terrorism efforts throughout Los Angeles County."

The proposed measure would add 0.5% to the current sales tax rate of 8.25%. That additional half-cent would generate \$500 million annually, which would be divided in three roughly equal parts among the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (\$166,743,600), the Los Angeles Police Department (\$167,948,983), and the Los Angeles County cities not policed by the LASD (\$165,307,417). A vote of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors can place the initiative on the November ballot. In a recent poll, 63% of likely voters said they would support the measure.

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