

JOHN SUTTIE, President
JON COUPAL, Chairman of the Board



Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Foundation

Howard Jarvis, Founder

August 24, 2020

City of Carson
701 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90745

Attn: Albert Robles, Mayor
Cedric Hicks, Mayor Pro Tem
Lula Davis-Holmes, Councilmember
Jawane Hilson, Councilmember
Jim Dear, Councilmember

Re: November 0.75% Sales Tax Campaign

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council:

We're not sure if you are aware, but just recently the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) approved a \$1.35 million settlement to be paid by the County of Los Angeles in response to findings that the County of Los Angeles spent taxpayer dollars campaigning for Measure H on the March 2017 ballot. This action by the FPPC was directly related to a legal action filed by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association (HJTA).

The City of Carson is reportedly planning to spend \$60,000.00 or more in taxpayer funds campaigning for a 0.75% sales tax increase proposal on the November 3, 2020 ballot. The Mayor has correctly advised against this, we hope his advice will be heeded.

The use of public funds for political advocacy is absolutely prohibited under the Political Reform Act of 1974 and the California Supreme Court's decision in *Stanson v. Mott* (1976) 17 Cal.3d 206. *Stanson* said it is a "fundamental precept" of fair elections that the public treasury cannot "take sides." Not only does it create an unfair advantage, it also violates the First Amendment right against compelled speech.

In short, public funds may not be spent on messages designed to influence the electorate. Nor may government resources, such as buildings, websites, and paid employee time, be utilized for campaigning. On behalf of your local taxpayers, please respond with your assurance, in detail,

EXHIBIT NO. 2

that the City of Carson will comply with the law and not spend public money or resources campaigning for the proposed sales tax increase.

Best regards,



Jon Coupal
Chairman

cc: Sanaz K. Soltani, City Attorney
Donesia Gause-Aldana, City Clerk
Nick Green, Southern California News Group