



March 7, 2024

The Honorable Will O'Neill  
Mayor, Newport Beach  
100 Civic Center Dr.  
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Dear Mayor O'Neill and Council Members,

On behalf of the League of California Cities, thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information regarding Cal Cities membership and advocacy activities. Cal Cities is proud to be member-driven and focused on strengthening California cities through proactive advocacy on their common interests.

Cal Cities membership, which extends to all elected and appointed officials in member cities, offers many opportunities to shape statewide policy and access cutting-edge professional development. City officials actively debate, shape, and steer Cal Cities' policy-development process and advocacy efforts through our Policy Committees. Committee recommendations are reviewed and subject to approval by the Cal Cities Board of Directors on a simple majority vote.

In the case of ballot measures, it takes an even higher vote threshold of 2/3<sup>rd</sup> approval before the Board may take a position on a statewide ballot measure. This helps ensure that the position has broad support, which is an essential element to being successful at the ballot box.

One of Cal Cities' greatest strengths lies in the unity of our diverse communities throughout the state, and we believe that the active participation of all city officials increases that strength. In a state as large and diverse as California, it is not surprising that our members may not agree on every policy issue all the time. However, we find there are many areas of consensus, and it is on those common interests that we can be most effective in our advocacy.

Cal Cities continues to be a strong advocate on priority issues in the Legislature that align with the City of Newport Beach's priorities. These include urging the state to do more to combat retail theft and the fentanyl crisis, provide much-needed oversight over sober living facilities, and reform the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) process. In summary, Cal Cities continues to be a strong voice for Newport Beach and all California cities on many key policy issues the council has taken positions on through the city's legislative platform.

Cal Cities is also advocating in the courts for Newport Beach and cities statewide. We filed an amicus brief in *Grants Pass v. Johnson*, a case involving local authority to address the homelessness crisis that is before the U.S. Supreme Court, and are directly



supporting your city with amicus briefs in legal cases, including *Pacific Shores Properties v. Newport Beach*.

I want to assure you that we received and heard the feedback you provided to Cal Cities during the study session on February 27, 2024.

Several cities shared concerns like yours about Proposition 1 when it was considered by the Policy Committees and the Board. That's why Cal Cities is sponsoring legislation this session to address issues caused by a lack of oversight of and regulation over sober living facilities. Specifically, Cal Cities is sponsoring three bills and co-sponsoring another bill related to this issue, including a bill authored by Assembly Member Diane Dixon establishing distancing requirements between licensed facilities. I want to take this opportunity to personally thank and recognize Council Member Robyn Grant, who serves as a key member of our Community Services Policy Committee, which is spearheading and overseeing our advocacy efforts on this important legislation.

However, sponsoring legislation is only the first step in a long process. Cities in partnership with Cal Cities will need to be vigilant advocates for these bills in order to realize the goal of seeing them passed by the Legislature, signed by the Governor and successfully implemented. I am confident that we can be successful if we continue to stand together and speak with a united voice.

Thank you again for sharing the city's feedback and for the opportunity to provide additional information. Cal Cities is stronger with Newport Beach as a member, and the city is stronger when it collaborates with cities regionally and statewide to advance shared policy priorities. If you have any questions, please contact Connor Medina, Regional Public Affairs Manager, at [cmedina@calcities.org](mailto:cmedina@calcities.org) or (949) 421-9898.

Sincerely,

  
Carolyn M. Coleman  
Executive Director and CEO

cc: Honorable City Council Members, City of Newport Beach  
Grace Leung, City Manager, City of Newport Beach