

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE JJ

Measure JJ would promote diverse representation of our community on the City Council and help remove money from politics.

Berkeley's new public financing of elections makes it possible for candidates with important perspectives to run but the very low compensation makes it impossible for many to serve. Single parents, young people without generational wealth, people of color and working-class residents are hindered by the compensation, which was set over 20 years ago and has not kept pace with area cost-of-living.

Measure JJ creates a formula tying the Mayor's compensation to that of a low-income household (\$107,300) and Councilmembers to a very low-income household (\$67,599). Using a formula avoids political influence in setting compensation. The total cost would be about \$277,000 annually.

Councilmembers presently receive \$38,695/year and the Mayor \$61,304, which places them at the extremely low-income and low-income level in Alameda County. Meanwhile, the average rent in the city has risen to \$3,183 per month. Councilmembers without wealth have to rely on a secondary source of income — a second job, a partner's income or accumulated assets — to be able to live in the districts they represent.

The Mayor and Council oversee a \$450 million budget, develop policy with colleagues through policy committees, represent the community at regular and special City Council meetings and serve constituents. The current structure assumes that the Mayor and Councilmembers are compensated only for attending regular Council meetings, vastly understating the time spent in other critical duties.

Berkeley is a world-renowned leader in many things, including bold legislation. Our residents expect their legislators to approach this job with their whole energy and mind. Reasonable compensation that allows leaders from diverse backgrounds to answer the call to service is a key to equitable, accessible and effective government.

Please join us in voting YES on Measure JJ.

s/Gordon Wozniak
former Councilmember, District 8

s/Daniel G. Newman
Author of Berkeley's public campaign finance system and the book "Unrig: How to Fix Our Broken Democracy"

s/Khin Chin
President, SEIU 1021 Community Services Chapter & Part Time Recreation Leaders Association

s/Ellen G. Wides

Former Chief of Division of Occupational Safety & Health, CA Labor Agency

s/Mansour Id-Deen

President - Berkeley NAACP