



CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

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CITY COUNCIL

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Councilmember

LAUREN MEISTER
Councilmember

September 19, 2017

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

RE: SB 149 (McGuire) Presidential Tax Transparency and Accountability Act- REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

The City of West Hollywood supports SB 149 (McGuire), the Presidential Tax Transparency and Accountability Act. The City of West Hollywood City Council unanimously adopted Resolution #17-4907 in support of SB 149. The resolution is attached. SB 149 is on your desk awaiting consideration.

The 2016 presidential election showed how important public disclosure of tax returns is to the integrity of our federal election system. Full transparency of presidential candidates is critical for voters to make an informed decision about choosing their elected officials. Of utmost importance is public disclosure of candidates' tax returns. Tax returns are a way for the public to determine if there are areas of conflict of interest, how much the candidates earn, their sources of income, and what charities they support. Tax returns can also corroborate claims candidates make on the campaign trail.

Presidential primary candidates campaigning in California need to meet the state's ethical standard for accountability. The disclosures required in SB 149 provide an opportunity for primary voters to learn about a candidate's financial dealings and help inform them as they make their presidential electoral decisions.

The City of West Hollywood urges you to sign SB 149.

Respectfully,

John Heilman
Mayor

Cc: Hon Mike McGuire, SD 2
Hon Benjamin Allen, SD 26
Hon Richard Bloom, AD 50

RESOLUTION NO. 17-4907

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD IN SUPPORT OF REQUIRING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TO RELEASE TAX RETURNS AND URGING THE COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES TO REQUIRE CANDIDATES TO DISCLOSE TAX RETURNS BEFORE APPEARING IN DEBATES

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, presidential candidates are currently not required to release tax returns; however, it has been customary over the past several decades for presidential candidates to release their tax returns; and

WHEREAS, income tax returns help the public to shed light on areas of possible conflicts of interest, tell the public how much a candidate gives to charity and what organizations the candidates choose to support, and provide information on how much a candidate earns and what their tax rate is; and

WHEREAS, every president since the election of Jimmy Carter in 1976 has released at least one year of tax returns, but as a candidate and president, President Trump has refused to follow this tradition; and

WHEREAS, polls show that the majority of likely American voters agree that they want presidential candidates to release their taxes; and

WHEREAS, California State Senators Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and Mike McGuire (D-Santa Rose) have issued a press release announcing that they will be co-authoring legislation to require that any future presidential or vice presidential candidate must make their tax returns public in order to appear on the California ballot; and

WHEREAS, the California bill is expected to be introduced before the February 17, 2017 filing deadline and will be modeled on similar legislation that has been proposed in New York, Senate Bill S8217, which requires that any presidential candidate must file five years of tax income returns no less than 50 days prior to the general election in which they wish to run; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Presidential Debates is a private, nonpartisan organization that establishes the eligibility criteria to determine which candidates appear in the presidential and vice-presidential debates; and

WHEREAS, including the requirement to disclose income tax returns in

the debate eligibility criteria would provide the American public with important information needed to select the best possible candidate for the presidency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of West Hollywood hereby:

Section 1. Supports the efforts of California State Senators Scott Wiener and Mike McGuire to require presidential candidates to release tax returns in order to be eligible to appear on the California ballot.

Section 2. Urges the Commission on Presidential Debates to require candidates to disclose tax returns before appearing in presidential or vice-presidential debates.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of West Hollywood at a regular meeting held this 23rd day of January, 2017 by the following vote:

AYES:	Councilmember:	D'Amico, Duran, Horvath, Mayor Pro Tempore Heilman, and Mayor Meister
NOES:	Councilmember:	None.
ABSENT:	Councilmember:	None.
ABSTAIN:	Councilmember:	None.



LAUREN MEISTER, MAYOR

ATTEST:


YVONNE QUARKER, CITY CLERK