



**Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

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MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA LEADS WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE'S PUBLIC SAFETY CUTS

Standing together, the Mayor, police and fire officials, business and religious leaders, opposed the Budget & Finance Committee's recommended budget cuts

LOS ANGELES - Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, leaders from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), business and religious communities, today voiced their opposition to the City Council's Budget & Finance Committee's recommended budget cuts to public safety.

"Keeping our City safe is the first responsibility of local government," Mayor Villaraigosa said. "It is the core service provided by L.A.'s leaders and fundamental to the success of our City. At a time when our most vulnerable households face the overwhelming challenges of a down economy and the prospect of rising crime rates, cutting cops is the last thing we should do."

On May 13, a majority of the City Council's Budget and Finance Committee voted to adopt the Chief Legislative Analyst's recommendations to cut hiring for police and fire departments as a way to balance the City's budget. The recommendation would result in taking 1,000 police officers off the streets of Los Angeles over the next two years at a saving of \$53 million in Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

"We must not pass a budget that fails the firefighters running into harm's way whenever duty calls, that endangers students and teachers, parents and neighbors, and that does an about-face on our men and women in uniform."

Over the past four years, the Mayor and Council have fulfilled their promise to the City's residents by building up the ranks of the LAPD to the highest level in City history. The results have been felt throughout Los Angeles as crime is at historically low levels, gang violence is on the decline, and the City is seeing the fewest homicides in four decades.

"The elected representatives of this City have a solemn obligation to ensure the security of every neighborhood and to do everything in our power to ensure safe streets for our families. I want to thank Councilmembers Wendy Greuel and Jose Huizar, the two members of the Budget Committee who voted to uphold our commitment, to defend those most at risk of being victims of crime, and to protect and to serve the people of Los Angeles," Mayor Villaraigosa added.

The full Council will begin deliberations on the Mayor's budget and the Budget & Finance Committee's recommendations on May 15. The final budget must be adopted by Council and sent to the Mayor by June 1.

Rising unemployment, the housing market crash and the credit crisis have caused City revenues to decline in nearly every category. The Mayor's proposal will balance a budget which faces a \$530 million deficit in the upcoming fiscal year with a combination of spending reductions, private investment and efficiencies, including some departmental consolidations.

"There is a way forward that keeps our police buildup intact, keeps our firefighters on the front lines, protects jobs, and preserves vital City services. It is time for Councilmembers and labor leaders, elected officials and City workers, to come to the table."

On April 20, the Mayor proposed to maintain police buildup and gang reduction efforts while preventing as many as 2,800 layoffs through shared responsibility and sacrifice by all City employees. Layoffs of this magnitude would hit nearly every City department and would result in a dramatic reduction in City services.

The Mayor has proposed an extensive menu of options, to be considered by the City Council, City employees and union leadership, which would prevent the need for layoffs and maintain a high level of City services by reducing the cost of the existing City workforce by more than 10 percent. The options include unpaid holidays, and reforms to mileage reimbursement, healthcare coverage and overtime.

Leading by example, the Mayor announced that he would cut his own salary by 12 percent, freeze his staff's wages and reduce his office budget by 10 percent.

The Mayor's proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 budget is available at <http://mayor.lacity.org>.

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