

INTRODUCTION OF AN ORDINANCE UPDATING THE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMIT



Summary

At its July 22, 2025, meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Detoy, supported by Councilmembers Keegan and Francois, requested an action item to update the City's established campaign contribution limit of \$250 set to an amount that would not trigger the requirements of the Levine Act.

- It was also requested that general information be presented about the Levine Act and about the recent updates to its regulated contribution limit.



Background

The Levine Act, codified as Government Code Section 84308, prohibits an elected official from accepting, soliciting, or directing a contribution exceeding the regulated contribution limit from a party or participant (or their agents) while:

1. A proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use, including most contracts, is pending before the agency; and
2. For 12 months after a decision is made.

When a campaign contribution exceeds the established regulated contribution limit, the elected official is subject to disclosure, recusal, and other requirements.



Background—Levine Act

January 1, 2025—SB 1243 (Dodd) and SB 1181 (Glazer), prohibits a party seeking a contract (other than competitively bid), license, permit, or other entitlements from making a contribution of more than \$500 to an elected official in the preceding twelve months before an item is “pending” before the elected official.

January 31, 2025—FPPC published an Advice Letter to clarify that the Levine Act would only be triggered should the contribution exceed \$500.



Background—HBMC

January 25, 2011—City Council adopted Ordinance No. 11-1320, amending the campaign contributions to \$250.

1. No person shall make a contribution to any candidate for city elective office, nor shall any candidate for city elective office accept any contribution in aid of the election of a candidate to a city elective office which will cause the total given by such person with respect to a single election to exceed the sum of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00). This section shall not apply to amounts given by a candidate to his or her own campaign.
2. Contributions by a husband and wife shall be treated as separate contributions and shall not be aggregated. Contributions by children under eighteen years of age shall be treated as contributions attributed equally to each parent or guardian.



Discussion

The new Levine Act regulated contribution limit of \$500 provides the City Council the option to raise its contribution limit without triggering the disclosure and recusal requirements of the Levine Act.



Recommendation

Staff recommends City Council introduce by title only and waive first reading of an Ordinance updating the campaign contribution limit to \$500.

