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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA

GOVERNMENT CENTER, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

April 21, 2015

Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Supervisors Bennett and Long to Adopt an Ordinance Repealing and reenacting Article 6, Chapter 2, Division 1 of the Ventura County Ordinance Code, Section 1261 et seq., Regarding Local Campaign Finance Reform and Direct Clerk to Publish a Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve the attached ordinance (Exhibit "A").
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish a summary as required by the Government Code.

DISCUSSION:

The Board heard and approved a first reading of this ordinance on April 14, 2015.

We are proposing a number of substantive revisions to the Ventura County Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance (Ordinance). The primary revision is the replacement of the Ethics Commission with a Hearing Officer, and the functional replacement of the Initial Complaint Reviewer and Investigating Attorney with a Compliance Officer. These revisions are intended to simplify and streamline the complaint adjudication process, reduce costs, and reduce the work effort and uncertainty on the part of complainants, campaigns, and County staff.

Other revisions were made to better conform the Ordinance to State law, current court rulings, and County practices. These include: the Purpose section was revised to improve consistency with current court cases; deleting of the definition of "sponsored committee" and "sponsored" because these terms are well defined in State law; revising the section on spousal contributions to refer to State law; revising the expenditure limit to reflect the current amounts as adjusted by the Clerk; adding definitions of Primary and General Election Cycles; updating references to Committees to comport with current State law and regulations; and lowering the threshold for mandatory electronic filing from \$3,000 to \$1,000.

These revisions should be adopted in advance of the next campaign cycle, which commences in June. The adoption of these revisions will streamline ordinance administration and complaint handling, conform the ordinance to new State laws and court decisions, and reduce the cost of ordinance compliance and administration.

With these revisions, the Ventura County Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance will be set to continue to serve its purpose into its second decade.

This letter and ordinance have been reviewed by County Counsel.

Cordially,



Steve Bennett
Supervisor, First District



Kathy I. Long
Supervisor, Third District

Attachment: Exhibit "A" ordinance (clean version)
Exhibit "B" ordinance (strike-through version)