



JERRY SANDERS
MAYOR

July 2, 2012

Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Senate President Pro Tempore
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable President Pro Tem Steinberg,

The Governor has identified pension reform as one of the most critical issues facing the state today. I share his desire for swift and real change and I applaud your efforts to tackle this sensitive issue this legislative session. However, the voters of San Diego spoke loudly last month in enacting sweeping pension reform. As a charter city, it is our right and our duty to ensure that our fiscal house is in order. Any statewide effort to undo the reform passed by an overwhelming majority of San Diegans violates this tenet of charter cities and usurps the will of the people of our city.

Simply put, doing so would be tragic.

As the state of California knows as well as anyone, skyrocketing pension costs are bringing cities, counties and states to the brink of fiscal collapse. In San Diego, pension costs have risen dramatically and could soon consume a full 25 percent of the general fund, which pays for basic city services. In California, the state's pension deficit has risen to at least \$85 billion and has been a major contributor to the state's financial mess.

The initiative that was approved in San Diego is fair to employees and taxpayers alike. It provides the same level of benefits afforded to tens of millions of Americans who work in the private sector. Nothing more, nothing less.

If this initiative is not enacted, an ever-increasing share of tax dollars will be shifted away from libraries, parks, police, fire, and critical infrastructure in order to pay for these unsustainable pension costs.

The majority of San Diegans – 66 percent – voted to reform San Diego's pension system. Clearly they have spoken. Any attempt to nullify their vote would be a slap in their face and an outright insult to the democratic process.

Page 2
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On behalf of the people of San Diego, I ask that you let this initiative be implemented.

Sincerely,



JERRY SANDERS

Mayor

cc: Assembly Member Martin Garrick
Assembly Member Nathan Fletcher
Assembly Member Toni Atkins
Assembly Member Brian Jones
Assembly Member Marty Block
Assembly Member Ben Hueso