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CITY OF LOMITA

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RYAN SMOOT
CITY MANAGER

March 27, 2023

The Honorable Chris Holden Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 742 (Jackson) Law Enforcement: Police Canines
Notice of OPPOSITION (As Amended 3/15/23)

Dear Assembly Member Holden:

On behalf of the City of Lomita, this letter expresses our city's respectful opposition to AB 742 (Jackson). This measure would provide that a peace officer shall not use an unleashed police canine to arrest or apprehend a person; for crowd control at any assembly, protest, or demonstration; and that a police canine shall not be used in any circumstance to bite.

Canines are meant to be utilized as non-lethal options in circumstances that call for a more robust law enforcement response. We remain concerned, however, with the overly broad restrictions that do not consider the highly dynamic and sometimes unruly nature of some public demonstrations and calls for service. While we recognize that this is not the typical experience, we also maintain that these tools were not intended for every situation.

It should be considered that an arbitrary ban on the use of canines may not increase public safety but further limit a peace officer's ability to enforce the law. Cities have experienced incidents resulting from demonstrations that have involved violence or risks to infrastructure that have resulted in significant damage. As drafted, this measure would leave our law enforcement officers with limited options for prevention or intervention.

Lomita supports accountability and oversight on the part of law enforcement agencies concerning police tools and policies. However, we do not support policies that restrict law enforcement agencies from utilizing tools that would otherwise enhance their ability to prevent criminal activity in the communities they serve.

For these reasons, the City of Lomita opposes AB 742.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Smoot", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ryan Smoot
City Manager

- c. Lomita Mayor and City Council
The Honorable Corey Jackson, assemblymember.jackson@assembly.ca.gov
The Honorable Al Muratsuchi, assemblymember.muratsuchi@assembly.ca.gov
The Honorable Ben Allen, senator.allen@senate.ca.gov
Michael White, Lieutenant and Acting Captain, LACSD Lomita Station
California Contract Cities Association, jorge@contractcities.org
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