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SENATOR LENA A. GONZALEZ

THIRTY-THIRD SENATE DISTRICT

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

January 7, 2025

Honorable Mayor and Members of the Long Beach City Council
411 W. Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Agenda Item #25: Strengthening the Long Beach Values Act

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

As Majority Leader of the California Senate representing District 33, I have a responsibility to protect our most vulnerable community members. It is with this commitment in mind that I express my strong support for strengthening the Long Beach Values Act. This enhancement will establish a stronger sanctuary city framework that will enhance protections for our diverse immigrant communities.

As the state with the largest immigrant community in the nation, California was proud to make an ethical and moral decision to protect the rights of refugees and immigrants who call our state home with the passing of SB 54 in 2017. Long Beach is one of the most diverse cities in the United States, home to the largest Cambodian refugee population outside of Cambodia, a thriving immigrant Filipino community, and a Latino population that represents over 44% of residents, of which 33.4% are foreign-born. Nearly 25% of Long Beach's population consists of foreign-born parents. Many of our community members are immigrants or come from immigrant families who depend on our leadership to ensure that Long Beach remains a safe and inclusive city for all.

Given this rich diversity, I strongly support strengthening the Long Beach Values Act by focusing on the following key recommendations:

- **Expanding the Scope of the Long Beach Values Act:** It is crucial that all city departments, offices, employees, officers, elected officials, appointees, and agents work to uphold our values of inclusivity.
- **Expanding Local Immigration Defense Services:** Prioritizing an additional \$200,000 for removal defense support will provide peace of mind and protection to some of our most vulnerable community members, ensuring they have access to essential legal resources.

- **Enhancing Multilingual Educational Materials:** Developing comprehensive educational materials in multiple languages will ensure accessibility to critical information for residents speaking the top languages in our city, thereby fostering better understanding and engagement across our diverse communities.
- **Strengthening the City's Commitment to Non-Cooperation with Immigration Enforcement:** By prohibiting the use of City resources, personnel, and property for purposes related to immigration enforcement. This proposed change will enhance the protections offered to our immigrant communities by improving transparency.

I urge the Long Beach City Council to take bold action by strengthening the Long Beach Values Act to safeguard all residents regardless of immigration status. If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact my office at (562) 256-7921.

Sincerely,



Lena Gonzalez
Senator, District 33