



# AGENDA REPORT

City Council

<b>DATE:</b>	September 24, 2024
<b>TO:</b>	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
<b>FROM:</b>	Councilmember Bana
<b>Subject:</b>	Discussion Regarding Proposed Amendments to Ordinance on Political Affiliates and Democratic Representation for Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b>	The proposed ordinance is not expected to have any significant financial impact on the city's budget. Administrative costs, if any, would be limited to processing additional disclosure forms and verifying information during the appointment process.
<b>PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:</b>	9/10/2024 – Council Approved Item O.1.a. nepotism in City Boards, Commissions, Committees and Task Forces
<b>STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:</b>	The City of Richmond has a long-standing commitment to transparency, fairness, and broad representation in its government bodies. The original ordinance limited individuals from serving on more than one city body at a time and addressed concerns related to conflicts of interest through the establishment of a nepotism policy. However, concerns have emerged regarding the influence of political advocacy groups on the composition of city boards, commissions, committees, and task forces.

<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	DISCUSS proposed amendments to Richmond Municipal Code Chapter 3.14 limiting the percentage of members of boards and commissioners that belong to any one political advocacy group or organization and DIRECT the City Attorney's Office to prepare the amendments - Councilmember Soheila Bana (510-620-6743)
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**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Richmond has a long-standing commitment to transparency, fairness, and broad representation in its government bodies. The original ordinance limited individuals from serving on more than one city body at a time and addressed concerns related to conflicts of interest through the establishment of a nepotism policy. However, concerns have emerged regarding the influence of political advocacy groups on the composition of city boards, commissions, committees, and task forces.

In order to prevent the potential overrepresentation of Political Affiliates from any one political advocacy group and ensure a more diverse and inclusive decision-making process, this amendment seeks to address these concerns by limiting the percentage of appointees connected to any one political group.

**DISCUSSION:**

The proposed amendment introduces the following key provisions:

1. **Limitation on Political Affiliates:** No more than **35%** of the members of any board, commission, committee, or task force may be active members of the same political advocacy group or organization. This measure ensures that no single group can dominate decision-making processes within these bodies.
2. **Definition of Political Affiliates:** Political Affiliates include individuals who hold membership, have leadership roles, participate in setting policies, or actively engage in activities such as canvassing, fundraising, organizing events, or participating in election campaigns for political advocacy groups whose primary focus is at the city or county level.
3. **Disclosure Requirement:** All applicants for boards, commissions, committees, and task forces are required to disclose any membership in city or county-level political advocacy groups and any recent participation in leadership, policymaking, canvassing, fundraising, or election campaigns related to local government. This transparency ensures that potential conflicts of interest are identified during the appointment process.
4. **Exemption for Broader Political Parties:** Membership in broader political parties such as the Democratic or Republican parties does not require disclosure

unless the individual is actively organizing, managing, or campaigning specifically for city or county-level government candidates or policies.

5. This amendment supports the City's commitment to **Democratic Representation**, ensuring that diverse voices and interests are considered in civic processes. It helps guard against political overreach while promoting fairness and transparency.

#### **DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

Attachment 1 – Proposed Ordinance Amendment on Political Affiliates and Democratic Representation (Proposed language from Council Member Bana)

Attachment 2 – Current Ordinance on Limiting Service to One City Body and Establishing a Nepotism Policy – Amended on September 10, 2024