

I just can't be quiet in my opposition to Measure B

I have a right to keep silent, but I can't! The most recent presentations by the proponents of Measure B – the proposed change to our City Charter to directly elect the mayor of Newport Beach – causes me to once again speak out. Last week, proponents of Measure B claimed that you need to be mayor to get positions on regional boards. Point of fact...Councilman (Will) O'Neill was just made the Chair of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency (the Toll Roads), and he is not mayor. He was also not the mayor when his appointment to this Board was made in 2016.

The proponent further stated that you need to be mayor to be a member of the OCTA Board. The current Board Chair of OCTA, Mark Murphy, was appointed to the Board in 2017 when he was a city councilman in Orange, not mayor. And he wasn't actually elected mayor until Nov. 2018. The vice-chair, Gene Hernandez, who was just re-appointed to the board, is currently the Mayor Pro tem of Yorba Linda, not the mayor.

Other than the OCTA, our city councilmembers, not the mayor, represent us on most Orange County agencies important to Newport Beach – 11 of them, in fact.

Councilman ("Duffy") Duffield has stated that he could not get the attention of the congressman in D.C. when he visited as a councilmember but could when he was mayor. The fact of the matter is that Newport Beach received the dredging money well after he was no longer mayor. If he thought it was so important to have the mayor present in order to get a meeting in D.C., the mayor should have accompanied him on this trip.

It should also be noted that the City had previously received \$16-\$18 million for dredging despite not having an elected mayor. My experience when representing the City in D.C., on two different trips, is that you actually get a lot more accomplished when meeting with staffers as opposed to the actual elected representative.

Let's not forget that Measure B has been proposed by the council majority that was responsible for the firing of one of the most effective city managers in the history of our city, Dave Kiff. And, although this proposed Charter Amendment does not explicitly detail the cost in the measure that the City will incur, the experience of other cities that have an elected mayor is that they have expenses in the hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of the position and the staff that is needed for this newly created office to function. There is no reason to believe that this will not be the case in Newport Beach.

To the proponents of Measure B I ask, "What didn't the City get that we needed because we have not had a directly elected mayor?" And, "Why did you abandon the signature gathering process to place this measure on the ballot and resort to going directly to the Council majority for approval?" No public outcry, no demand from constituents, the city is and has been governed well for the past 70 years; the City is financially sound, citizens are not complaining, so where did this come from?

I have the right to remain silent, but in this case I just can't. I urge you to vote NO on Measure B.

Jeff Herdman

Newport Beach City Council, 2016-2020

Newport Beach