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To "Bob Foster" <mayor@longbeach.gov>, "Dee Andrews" <district6@longbeach.gov>, "Gary DeLong" <district3@longbeach.gov>, "Gerrie Schipske" <district5@longbeach.gov>, "Patrick O'Donnell" <district4@longbeach.gov>, "Rae Gabelich" <district8@longbeach.gov>, "Suja Lowenthal" <district2@longbeach.gov>, "Tonia Reyes Uranga" <district7@longbeach.gov>, "Val Lerch" <district9@longbeach.gov>
cc "Patrick West" <Patrick_West@longbeach.gov>, "Heather Mahood" <heather_mahood@longbeach.gov>, "Linda Trang" <Linda_Trang@longbeach.gov>, <cityclerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject Support for Smoking Lounge Ordinance

#26

Honorable Mayor and City Council,

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the City Council meeting tonight nor publicly express my appreciation for your thoughtful efforts to resolve the concerns of these hard working local businesses owners. I sincerely and genuinely appreciate your efforts to help the cigar shop owners and cigar smokers, and encourage your continued support of the Smoking Lounge Ordinance. In the interests of full disclosure, I should acknowledge that I am both a cigar smoker and the landlord of an independently owned cigar lounge (Anto's Cigar Lounge). So your support of this ordinance will affect me personally, as a cigar smoker, and assist my tenant (Anto Kamarian) as a cigar lounge owner and local businessman.

I believe it is necessary and appropriate for the City to regulate smoking in public places, though I find an "across-the-board" ban on any smoking in all public places excessive and unrealistic. Human beings are social beings by nature, and regularly assemble to socialize. The City's smoking ordinance should recognize that cigar smoking is an inherently social activity, and that cigar smokers need a public place to assemble and socialize. Although I typically smoke at home (in my backyard), I've enjoyed numerous cigars and the camaraderie of good friends in the comfort of one of the City's cigar lounges. These facilities provide their patrons (like me), a safe and relaxing public place to enjoy themselves and their cigars, without disturbing or endangering the non-smoking public. Unless it is your intent to regulate the personal lifestyle decisions of free adults, nothing more is needed to protect the public.

There has been a cigar shop and smoking lounge in one of my Belmont Shore properties since before the City's original smoking ordinance was enacted. A similar cigar and smoke shop has existed in a former City Councilmember's property for nearly the same period. For all these many years, the City has issued

business licenses and collected license fees from these business owners (or their predecessors in interest). Unfortunately, when the City's smoking ordinances were enacted and later amended, these business owners and the need for their existence was overlooked or ignored. As a result, these businesses have been operating under a cloud of doubt: able to obtain a business license from the City, though arguably in violation of the City's smoking ordinance. The Smoking Lounge Ordinance provides clarification and removes any doubt. Please help us by continuing to support Smoking Lounge Ordinance, a limited and reasonable exception to an otherwise "across-the-board" smoking ban. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Bill

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