

**From:** Joanna Diaz <joanna@lbforward.org>

**Sent:** Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:33 AM

**To:** Mayor <Mayor@longbeach.gov>; Shawna Stevens <Shawna.Stevens@longbeach.gov>; Council District 1 <District1@longbeach.gov>; Lynn Ward <Lynn.Ward@longbeach.gov>; Council District 2 <District2@longbeach.gov>; Rahul Sen <Rahul.Sen@longbeach.gov>; Mimi Masher <Mimi.Masher@longbeach.gov>; district3@longbeach.org; Council District 4 <District4@longbeach.gov>; Isabel Arvea <Isabel.Arvea@longbeach.gov>; Council District 5 <District5@longbeach.gov>; Council District 6 <District6@longbeach.gov>; Chork Nim <Chork.Nim@longbeach.gov>; Annie Chean <Annie.Chean@longbeach.gov>; Council District 7 <District7@longbeach.gov>; Sean Bernhoft <Sean.Bernhoft@longbeach.gov>; Council District 8 <District8@longbeach.gov>; Bryan Martinez <Bryan.Martinez@longbeach.gov>; Esther Ogunrinu <Esther.Ogunrinu@longbeach.gov>; Council District 9 <District9@longbeach.gov>; Anjelica Vargas <Anjelica.Vargas@longbeach.gov>; CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>; Tom Modica <Tom.Modica@longbeach.gov>

**Subject:** Language Justice Coalition Letter of Support for FY 24 Budget Demands

**-EXTERNAL-**

Dear Mayor Richardson, Council Members, and City Manager,

The Language Justice Coalition is urging our city to invest the necessary structural resources towards language justice in order to provide a more welcoming, equitable, and just city for our diverse Long Beach community.

**Please find attached the Language Justice Coalition's Letter of Support.**

Below you will find our FY 2024 Budget Demands along with the names of some of our key partners who have signed on in support of our ongoing journey towards fully resourcing and implementing the City's Language Access Policy:

### **Language Justice City Budget Demands**

#### **Fiscal Year 2024 (\$3,500,000)**

- **Dedicate a proper number of permanent staff (2 additional full-time Language Access Coordinators, 2 full-time Spanish interpreters, 2 full-time Khmer interpreters, 2 full-time Tagalog interpreters) to fully implement the City's Language Access Policy.**
- **Permanently provide in-house language access resources for Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog to ensure faster and higher quality interpretation and translation for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) residents.**
- **Provide Spanish and Khmer interpretation, and English Captioning and CART services at all City Council and all Commission meetings without having to make requests in advance.**

- **Dedicate resources for language needs not covered by in-house Language Access Specialists to ensure linguistic inclusion and equal access for all Long Beach community members. Increase the use of a qualified network of contractors for all languages to meet current needs, this will include the cost of contracted vendors for language support in all requested languages beyond Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog, as well as tasks in these languages that are beyond the capacity of the in-house Language Access Specialists.**
- **Bilingual Skill Pay and proactive recruitment of bilingual staff in all languages and throughout all city departments to consistently and meaningfully strengthen the delivery of interpretation and translation throughout the city and finally create a culture of language justice.**
- **Provide community-based organizations who work with LEP residents ongoing stipends to conduct outreach about the Language Access Policy.**

#### **In Solidarity with the Language Justice Coalition:**

AAPI Equity Alliance (AEA)

AOC7 Neighborhood Organization (AOC7)

Cambodia Town (CT)

Educated Men with Meaningful Messages (EM3)

Filipino Migrant Center (FMC)

Khmer Parent Association (KPA)

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC)

Long Beach for a Just Economy

Long Beach Forward (LBF)

Long Beach Residents Empowered (LiBRE)

Organizing Rooted in Abolition, Liberation, and Empowerment (ORALE)

Pacific Asian Counseling Services (PACS)

Rose Park Neighborhood Association (RPNA)

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)

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In Solidarity,

**Joanna Diaz** (She/Her/Ella)

Civic Engagement Program Manager



The Long Beach Forward team is practicing Summer hours across all of our schedules to prepare ourselves for the community building work ahead. We will be unavailable from 1:00pm to 5:00pm on Fridays from June 23rd to September 1st. Thank you for your patience and grace while we follow up with you.

*We envision a Long Beach where race and income do not determine one's future—a community where everyone is safe, connected, and healthy. [www.lbforward.org](http://www.lbforward.org)*

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September 1, 2023

Dear Mayor Richardson, City Council Members, and City Manager,

In 2012, a group of diverse community based organizations, community members, and allies came together to create the Language Access Coalition (LAC). In 2013, the LAC passed a more inclusive Language Access Policy (LAP) in the City of Long Beach that grew to include Khmer and Tagalog resources. In the following years, the LAC pushed to provide professional interpretation so that children were no longer the primary interpreters for their families outside of emergency situations. In 2022, the LAC became the Language Justice Coalition (LJC) in order to broaden our efforts to promote best practices around linguistic inclusion and equitable communication. We also sought to expand language service resources in Long Beach to include and center languages beyond those specifically listed in the LAP, American Sign Languages (ASL), linguistic variants of ASL, and other sign languages, as well as other resources like captioning and CART services, that would better benefit communities such as the Black community and those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

We, the undersigned organizations and community members, seek to elevate community awareness of and improvements to the Language Access Policy, as well as overall support for language justice in the City of Long Beach. Over the years, there has been a clear call for and demonstration of the dire need for in-language services, increased availability of on-demand interpreting, multilingual content, and written translations throughout city operations. Only with the increase of funding and resources can we effectively increase community access to the necessary information and processes that our community deserves.

There is also a great need to develop the infrastructure to engage in community education around the Language Access Policy (LAP). The City must work with partners and community leaders to develop presentations, flyers, and the overall know your rights campaign as part of community outreach. These efforts should also include focus groups, interviews, presentations, and the development of materials to further the goal of increased awareness of the LAP, the development of best practices for linguistic inclusion, and meaningful engagement in City processes.

As we have seen from the pandemic, it is critical to center and create equitable multilingual spaces for languages in our diverse communities beyond Spanish, especially those that have been historically marginalized. Many programs and services continue to be largely only in English and Spanish, leaving out significant populations that have unique needs and experiences. The result is that these communities remain underserved and become further isolated without access to critical services and benefits.

The City of Long Beach must enhance existing infrastructures for serving linguistically diverse communities in order to implement a more comprehensive and robust community based Language Access Program. Building community infrastructure and effective models of equitable language service delivery within the City of Long Beach will make meaningful language access a reality for all.



## Language Justice City Budget Demands Fiscal Year 2024 (\$3,500,000)

The Language Justice Coalition has the following city budget demands for Fiscal Year 2024:

- 1. Dedicate a proper number of permanent staff (2 additional full-time Language Access Coordinators, 2 full-time Spanish interpreters, 2 full-time Khmer interpreters, 2 full-time Tagalog interpreters) to fully implement the City's Language Access Policy.**
- 2. Permanently provide in-house language access resources for Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog to ensure faster and higher quality interpretation and translation for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) residents.**
- 3. Provide Spanish and Khmer interpretation, and English Captioning and CART services at all City Council and all Commission meetings without having to make requests in advance.**
- 4. Dedicate resources for language needs not covered by in-house Language Access Specialists to ensure linguistic inclusion and equal access for all Long Beach community members. Increase the use of a qualified network of contractors for all languages to meet current needs, this will include the cost of contracted vendors for language support in all requested languages beyond Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog, as well as tasks in these languages that are beyond the capacity of the in-house Language Access Specialists.**
- 5. Bilingual Skill Pay and proactive recruitment of bilingual staff in all languages and throughout all city departments to consistently and meaningfully strengthen the delivery of interpretation and translation throughout the city and finally create a culture of language justice.**
- 6. Provide community-based organizations who work with LEP residents ongoing stipends to conduct outreach about the Language Access Policy.**

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