



Date: September 19, 2017

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.H.W.*

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services *KC*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

**Subject: Human Relations Commission Letter of Recommendation for an Ordinance to Protect Women from Physical and Sexual Abuse**

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As the Long Beach City Council's principal advisory commission promoting peace, tolerance, acceptance, and mutual respect, the Human Relations Commission submits the attached recommendation to the City Council in support of an ordinance to protect women from physical and sexual abuse.

For more information regarding this recommendation, please contact Teresa Gomez, Human Dignity Program Coordinator, at (562) 570-6730.

ATTACHMENT

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
REBECCA JIMENEZ, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER  
KATIE BALDERAS, OFFICE OF EQUITY

KC: TG

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**CITY OF LONG BEACH  
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Miles McNeeley, Chair  
LaDawn Best, Commissioner  
Nikole Cababa, Commissioner  
Gio Ferraro, Commissioner  
Otis Hogan, Commissioner  
Kimmy Maniquis Commissioner  
Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_



Elaine Bernal, Vice Chair  
Elisa Buchanan, Commissioner  
Amy Eriksen, Commissioner  
Veronica Quincy, Commissioner  
Rohida Khan, Commissioner  
Zoe Nicholson,

September 15, 2017

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
City of Long Beach  
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**Re: Ordinance to Protect Women from Physical and Sexual Abuse**

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

The Human Relations Commission supports the recommendation listed on agenda item #22 (17-0826) of the September 19<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. The purpose and function of the Human Relations Commission is to “promote full acceptance of all citizens in the community in all aspects of community life, to recommend to the City Council measures, including legislation, which will serve to improve positive human relations and the elimination of discriminatory practices, and to enhance and improve mutual understanding and respect for all citizens of the community.” It is in this context that the Human Relations Commission placed the topic of addressing abuse experienced by hotel workers on our agenda.

Over the last few years, our commission has learned that there is an distinct set of circumstances related to hotel work that concern the safety of hotel workers. We have learned that employees experience a myriad of working conditions that threaten their health, safety, mental health, and dignity, such as proximity to unsafe private spaces and power differentials between workers, guests, and management. We also believe variables related to gender, class, and immigration status play a significant role in the hotel worker experience. Our perspective on this topic has been informed by the testimony of community leaders, hotel workers, and data provided by hotel worker advocates.

Long Beach hotel workers have reported verbal and sexual aggression or assault by hotel customers. A 2008 study published in *Aggression and Violent Behavior* suggests this is reflective of a larger phenomenon in the hotel industry. To add further concern, Long Beach hotel workers have stated that managers have asked them to return to their work floor even after reporting inappropriate or harassing behavior from hotel guests. It has

been reported that when hotel security has been called, responses may be delayed or inappropriate.

Local hotel workers also report inhumane working conditions related to workload, shift lengths, and an inability to refuse overtime without fear of retaliation. Worker testimony suggests that current policy in many local hotels is inadequate in addressing issues related to workload and safety.

Following careful consideration of our charter and purview, as well as community testimony, we have determined that increased legal protections for hotel workers is crucial to ensuring a safe working environment within Long Beach hotels. Working within the framework of the Office of Equity, our commission believes that all people tied to the hotel industry should benefit from its economic impact. At a bare minimum, employees in the hotel industry are deserving of basic human dignity. It is in this light that we urge the City Council to support the recommendations listed on Agenda item #22 (17-0826) of the September 19, 2017 City Council meeting. To summarize, the recommendation calls for hotels with 100 or more rooms to adopt the following:

1. Workers should be provided with a panic button and security should respond within 3 minutes.
2. Workers have the right to be reassigned to an area other than where an assault has occurred.
3. Signage should be posted in hotel rooms, bars, and hallways alerting guests of panic buttons and the legal protections of hotel workers.
4. Housekeepers workload shall be limited to 4,000 square feet per 8-hour work day.
5. Hotel workers have the right to opt out of overtime without retaliation from management.

The Human Relations Commission submits this recommendation with a vision of a Long Beach where our City continues to embrace the values of justice, equity, respect, and dignity for all its residents.

Respectfully,

Miles McNeeley, Chair  
Human Relations Commission