



Project Area Committee

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Honorable Mayor Bob Foster
Office of the Mayor
333 W. Ocean Blvd., 14th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Honorable Mayor Foster:

At the August 27 Special Meeting of the Westside Project Area Committee, the PAC voted unanimously to oppose the Port bailout of the Aquarium, and the payment from the Westside of \$27 million to the Port. The position was taken for the following reasons:

- 1) The Port is biggest winner, not the city; loaning \$8 million and getting \$35 million back (\$8 million plus \$27 million).
- 2) It's a short sighted solution. This bailout only covers the next two years of bond payments. Year three and beyond are not addressed.
- 3) This proposal sets a bad precedent, as it clears the way for future redevelopment dollars to be diverted to the Port/General Fund.
- 4) The proposal is an improper use of redevelopment dollars, which are intended to cure blight.
- 5) \$27 million from Westside may jeopardize the completion of a project that was first addressed in the 1975 Westside Redevelopment Plan, and used in 1992 as justification for Westside bonding, that being the undergrounding and upgrading the utilities in the area. We do not yet have estimates of costs to achieve this project. Therefore, to take money away that may be needed for this major project completion is fiscally irresponsible.
- 6) The proposal lacks transparency. The \$27 million is not to pay the Port for "infrastructure improvements." It is to fulfill the Downtown Project Area's \$27 million loan obligation to the Port.

We ask that you oppose what is being proposed, and suggest that the Port pay the \$8 million Aquarium bond payments *without reimbursement* as mitigation for water contamination caused by Port activity. The contamination directly affects the cost of operating the Aquarium, making the Aquarium gather its clean water all the way to Catalina Island. The Port should be a good neighbor and not look to benefit from Redevelopment or the City.

Best regards,
Tony Rivera / Chairman, Westside Project Area Committee

cc: Councilmembers Robert Garcia, Suja Lowenthal, Gary DeLong, Patrick O'Donnell, Gerrie Schipske, Dee Andrews, Tonia Reyes Uranga, Rae Gabelich, and Val Lerch