



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Robert Garcia
Councilmember, First District

Date: July 6, 2010
To: Honorable Mayor, Members of Charter Amendment Committee
From: Councilmember Robert Garcia, First District
Subject: **Jobs for Vets Ballot Proposition**

Background:

Many cities and states, and the Federal Government, have long awarded additional points on civil service job examinations to veterans of the United States Armed Forces, as long as a passing score is achieved. The unremarried spouses of veterans disabled or killed in service are also often eligible for this preference. The Long Beach City Charter awards 10 points to veterans and to the spouses of vets who are disabled or killed in service.

Although the Long Beach preference policy is generally fair, other cities and states usually award more points to disabled veterans. They also sometimes set a lower threshold for disability, usually 10%. Currently, under the Long Beach Charter, a veteran must be at least 30% disabled for the veteran's spouse to receive any preference.

Given the increasing number of veterans returning from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters of operation, and given the fact that veterans need as much support as possible to reintegrate into civilian life, a strengthened preference would benefit Long Beach by providing increased opportunity for veterans to return to the civilian workforce, including Port jobs, most of which require a civil service exam.

Because this would require a Charter change, it must be put before voters. To be on the November ballot, this proposal would need to be completed and submitted to the County Registrar by August 6.

Recommendation:

Request the Charter Amendment Committee draft a ballot proposition for November asking voters to approve an amendment to the Long Beach City Charter that would:

1. Increase the point preference on job examinations to 15 points for all veterans and eligible spouses, and
2. Lower the threshold for spousal eligibility to cover spouses of veterans with 10% or greater disability.