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**Sent:** Wednesday, September 7, 2022 6:33 PM  
**To:** Antonio (Tony) Viramontes <[Tony.Viramontes@longbeach.gov](mailto:Tony.Viramontes@longbeach.gov)>  
**Subject:** General public comment for EHRC 9/7/22 meeting

**-EXTERNAL-**

Dear Tony,

In case you're able to share my general public comment in written form to commissioners, I'm enclosing it below. I realize this email may be too late. Regardless, I appreciate your assistance!

Best wishes,

Parisa

**General Public Comment for EHRC's 9/7/22 meeting**

Good evening commissioners. My name is Parisa Vinzant. Most of you know me from my work on FRT for the City's Technology and Innovation commission. I'm speaking here in my personal capacity to bring some concerns to your attention about the city's new commissioner stipend policy in part because my experience appears to be drastically different than other commissioners and because of concerns for the exclusion of undocumented community members from participating in our appointed city commissions.

As you're likely aware, commissioners are now eligible to receive a per meeting stipend. But the City Council passed salary resolution provides no guidance on how payment should be provided, nor does it require that commissioners must accept compensation to continue serving.

When I learned the only way the city would pay the stipend was through completion of W-4 part-time employee onboarding, I tried to decline compensation due to ethical concerns but was told I could not do that and remain a commissioner. Working through my commission's administrative officer, I received a response from the city attorney on June 24th that commissioners cannot opt out of compensation and remain on their commissions. I requested information and clarifications, including written policies reflecting what I'd been told via email. Multiple times I've tried to get clear information, but I have only been partially successful.

Meanwhile, I have outreached to four different commissions and learned that these commissioners had been told that the stipend was "voluntary" or "optional." It's unclear why I have been told such different information.

The key equity issue that I raised with city staff that has still not been addressed is that by implementing the supposedly mandatory stipend policy by W-4 requirement, including completion of the i-9 form, it creates unnecessary barriers to exclude our undocumented community members from participating in our appointed city commissions. These requirements go against SB 225 that Governor Newsom approved in Fall 2019 that states, "(f) It is the intent of the Legislature to remove barriers to service and authorize all California residents, including those without lawful immigration status, to serve on California's diverse local and state boards and commissions so that their perspectives and voices are heard."

Considering that the EHRC has publicly stated its intent to expand the diversity of its commissioners to include Long Beach's undocumented community members, I hope you'll make inquiries into my concerns. Thank you for your consideration.