CRISIS AT LA CITY COUNCIL
A Self-Guided Explainer for the LA Community

Dr. Raphael Sonenshein
Executive Director
Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at Cal State LA

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Watch for Updates
THE LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

- 15 members
- 4 year terms, 3 term limit
- Most powerful city council in the United States
- Council members select the council president (8-vote majority required)
- Quorum to meet requires 10 members
“Horseshoe” seat assignments are in alphabetical order starting at left of council president, ending at right of council president.
HOW THE COUNCIL LOOKED ON OCTOBER 9

One temporary vacancy (CD#10) filled by temporary appointed voting member
• Council President Nury Martinez steps down and resigns seat

• Council President pro tempore Mitch O’Farrell automatically assumes council presidency

• Now one full vacancy (CD#6), one temporary vacancy (CD#10)
• Public and city council pressure on two other councilmembers to step down, CD#1 (Gil Cedillo) and CD#14 (Kevin De Leon)

• Charter does not provide method for council to remove these two members under present circumstances
• Council votes unanimously on October 18 to elect Paul Krekorian (CD#2) as council president

• LA City Charter mandates that council president becomes acting mayor while the mayor is out of state

• The council president retains that position while serving as acting mayor
Council turnover likely when new city council members sworn in on December 12, after November 8 election

Only 7 of 15 members assured of returning to office

One incumbent (CD#1) already defeated in primary

Another incumbent (CD#13) facing runoff

Three incumbents not running for re-election (CD#5, #11, #15)

New city council can elect new council president if they wish to do so
VACANCIES: WHAT CAN COUNCIL DO?

- Council president can appoint a non-voting caretaker
- Council can vote to appoint a voting member, or call a special election
- CD#6: Non-voting caretaker likely for now, anticipated to have special election no sooner than March 2023
- CD#1: If councilmember resigns, council will likely appoint winner of primary election (Eunisses Hernandez) to serve until they officially take office in December
- CD#14: If councilmember resigns, likely to have caretaker followed by either appointed voting member or special election
REFORM IN THE AIR

- Independent redistricting commission?
- Enlarge the city council?
- Update ethics laws?
- Reexamine council member powers over land use?
- Your ideas?
How would these reforms happen?

- Most would require amending the city charter.
- Changes to the city charter require either the city council to place a measure on the ballot (by ordinance) or for voters to place a proposed amendment on the ballot through the initiative process.
- Whichever path is adopted, voters have the final word.
CONTACT US

pbi@calstatela.edu
Raphael.Sonenshein@calstatela.edu

Website: calstatela.patbrowninstitute.org
Twitter: PBI | RSonensheinPBI
Instagram: pat_brown_institute
Facebook: /PatBrownInstitute