



February 6, 2009

Honorable Tony Mendoza, Member  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2188  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 155 - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Mendoza:

The Riverside Sheriffs' Association, which represents over 3,200 rank and file deputy sheriffs, sheriffs, deputy probation officers, law enforcement investigators and counselors, coroners and bailiffs - the entire law enforcement team in Riverside County - is pleased to support AB 155.

Under existing law, any taxing agency or instrumentality of the state may file a petition and prosecute to completion bankruptcy proceedings permitted under the laws of the United States. AB 155 would provide that a local public entity may only file under federal bankruptcy law with the approval of the Local Agency Bankruptcy Committee that would consist of the State Controller, the State Treasurer, and the State Director of Finance.

AB 155 addresses the issue of whether a public entity should declare bankruptcy with no oversight. As cities, such as Vallejo, are subdivisions of the state, and accept state financial aid, there is certainly a proper nexus for such oversight.


Allegedly, according to some accounts, Vallejo fell victim to over-generous pay and benefit contracts to city unions. In fact, the opposite is true.


Vallejo is not an example of a local give-away, but rather an example of what happens when an out-of-control driver is steering the bus. In Vallejo, the public safety unions were willing to make concessions to help the city address its revenue shortage. However, the city manager, and extremely highly paid individual who helped create Vallejo's fiscal mess had other ideas. He wanted to force the city into bankruptcy, and thus made such

draconian take-away demands to the city's police and fire unions that they had no option but to say "no"! The unions, not the city manager, thus ended up taking the political heat for a problem *they did not create, because they refused to knuckle under to draconian take-aways.*

Accountability for local financial mismanagement issues is always a good policy. Accordingly, we support your bill, AB 155.

Very truly yours,

  
Pat McNamara  
President

  
Timothy H. B. Yaryan  
Legislative Counsel and Advocate

cc: RSA Board of Directors