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Councilmember

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Councilmember

May 8, 2026

The Honorable Blanca Pacheco
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, 4510
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 1821 — California Public Records Act: Agency Response
Time — SUPPORT (As Amended April 6, 2026)**

Dear Assemblymember Pacheco:

On behalf of the City of Paramount, I write in support of Assembly Bill 1821, which would make a narrow but important clarification to the California Public Records Act by calculating certain agency response periods in business days rather than calendar days.

Public agencies are committed to transparency and providing timely access to public records. At the same time, the volume, complexity, and format of public records have changed significantly. Requests now routinely involve large volumes of email, text messages, electronic files, audio and video recordings, body-worn camera footage, and other digital records that must be searched, reviewed, and, when legally required, redacted before release. This work often requires coordination among multiple departments, information technology staff, legal counsel, and records personnel.

Current law requires an agency to make its initial determination within 10 calendar days, with a possible 14-calendar-day extension under unusual circumstances. Because those timeframes include weekends and holidays, agencies may not receive the full number of working days needed to conduct a careful and legally compliant review. AB 1821 would provide a more practical and consistent framework by changing those periods to 10 business days and 14 business days.

This adjustment is especially important for local agencies where staffing is limited and public records responsibilities are often carried out by employees who also support public meetings, elections, boards and commissions, agenda management, contract routing, records management, and other core services. A business-day standard would not reduce an agency's obligation to respond to records requests or make disclosable records available. Rather, it would help ensure that agencies have a reasonable opportunity to identify responsive records, determine whether exemptions apply, protect confidential or legally protected information, and provide accurate responses.

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The City of Paramount is a small, fully built-out community with limited staffing capacity and a high volume of operational responsibilities spread across a lean workforce. Public records duties are carried out by staff who also manage City Council and commission agendas, elections, contract processing, records retention, and day-to-day administrative operations. In 2025, Paramount received approximately 450 public records requests, many of which required review of building permit records, code enforcement records, emails, video footage, and personnel-related materials. These requests often require coordination among multiple divisions, including the City Clerk's Office, Public Safety, Planning and Building, Public Works, and Information Technology.

Even when staff work diligently, weekends and holidays significantly reduce the number of actual working days available to complete the required review. The shift to a business-day standard would provide a more realistic and workable timeline for Paramount while fully preserving the public's right to access disclosable records.

California's local agency clerks, records managers, and other public records professionals see firsthand how important it is to balance prompt public access with careful legal compliance. AB 1821 supports that balance. It recognizes that public records work is not simply a matter of locating a document; it frequently requires thoughtful review to protect privacy, privileged communications, confidential information, and other records exempt from disclosure under state or federal law.

For these reasons, **the City of Paramount** supports AB 1821 and we thank you for your leadership on this most important issue. Please feel free to contact City Manager John Moreno at (562) 220-2225, if you have any questions. We thank you for your time and consideration.

CITY OF PARAMOUNT



Brenda Olmos
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Honorable Congresswoman Nanette Barragan, 44th District
Honorable Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache, 62nd District
Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District
California Municipal Clerks Association
Nicholas Cabeza, Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities
Jorge Morales, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Consultant, California Contract Cities Association