



March 29, 2007

Mayor Mickey Cafagna  
Council Member Merrilee Boyack  
Council Member Bob Emery  
Council Member Don Higginson  
Council Member Betty Rexford  
City Of Poway  
13325 Civic Center Drive  
Poway, CA 92064

Subject: Proposed Poway sign ordinance (#653)

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

As a citizens group representing many South Poway area residents, SOUTH POWAY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (SPRA) would like to summarize below our members' thoughts regarding the proposed sign ordinance. The following is an overview of the major themes that emerged from many discussions and after polling our group members for their input on proposed ordinance #653.

#### **SUPPORT POWAY'S SMALL BUSINESSES**

SPRA has consistently spoken out on behalf of our smaller businesses and Mom'n'Pop type stores and restaurants which are struggling in Poway. It seems the city bends over backwards for the larger businesses (CostCo, Kohl's, Home Depot, car dealerships, etc.) but our locally-owned small businesses too often are forgotten. SPRA does not want to make advertising and promoting our smaller businesses in Poway any harder than it already is. Thus, this is one reason to oppose this proposed sign ban.

This is also a "quality of life" issue. We want to keep our special and convenient smaller businesses right here in Poway. It does not benefit anyone to have empty stores, which we see far too often. Also, rent for stores in Poway is already very high which makes it difficult for small businesses to stay afloat. Restricting advertising signs and banners just makes it that much harder to promote a business.

#### **WHAT'S THE REAL SAFETY ISSUE?**

Council members have labeled this a "safety issue". If this is so, then let's take a serious look at the facts and data regarding Poway traffic accidents caused by moving sign distractions. We doubt there is enough substantiated data to justify a ban on "moving" signs, humans in costume and real or fake animal sign distractions, etc., on Poway streets. If safety is truly a concern, perhaps the City Council should consider a ban on the use of cell phones while driving? Certainly cell phone use is much more of a driving distraction and a much bigger traffic safety issue in Poway.

#### **SOUTH POWAY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

JOE ST. LUCAS – CHAIRPERSON • CONNIE MESSINA – VICE CHAIRPERSON  
ELDA PARMLEY – TREASURER • KAREN KNECHT – SECRETARY  
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**DON'T RESTRICT FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

SPRA members have very serious concerns about the basic FREEDOM OF SPEECH restrictions in the proposed ordinance. This ordinance would make it illegal in the City of Poway to conduct any kind of political protest or election campaign activity on the streets or any public place in Poway. Certainly this would make it very difficult for groups such as SPRA to speak out on any public issue or promote a challenger candidate. Most importantly, by passing this ordinance the city would be violating basic Constitutional protections regarding freedom of speech.

This proposed ordinance is much too broadly restrictive and certainly infringes on freedom of speech for every resident and every business in Poway. Thus, we strongly urge you to vote against it.

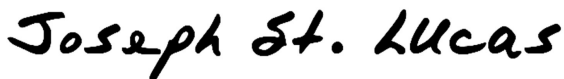
In closing we would like to quote one of our wise founding fathers:

**Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.**

**Benjamin Franklin, *Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759***

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best Regards,



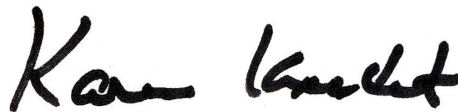
Joseph St. Lucas  
Chairperson



Connie Messina  
Vice Chairperson



Elda Parmley  
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Karen Knecht  
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cc: Rod Gould, City Manager – City of Poway  
Jose Lopez and Pat Kumpan – POWAY NEWS CHIEFTAIN  
Andrea Moss – NORTH COUNTY TIMES  
Lisa Petrillo – SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE