

JOHN LEE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMEMBER • DISTRICT 12



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For Immediate Release

COUNCILMEMBER JOHN LEE'S STATEMENT ON ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST HIM BY ETHICS COMMISSION

Today, the City Ethics Commission released an accusation against me that is misguided and based on conjecture instead of actual evidence.

For the last 20 months, Commission investigators have wasted critical taxpayer resources to investigate a dinner in 2016 that I do not recall attending, have drastically inflated the amount of food and beverages I consumed during a June 2017 trip in Las Vegas during my final 11 days as a City Council staff member, and lodged accusations that are completely false.

The Commission falsely states that the FBI started an investigation into whether I accepted gifts. Further, they falsely state I attempted to mislead the FBI. Both accusations are categorically false.

They fully know I have never been a target or a subject of any federal investigation. Throughout this process, I have gone above and beyond to cooperate with the Commission's investigation in the name of transparency. I have provided bank statements that corroborate what I recalled about this trip, sat for interviews, and have been transparent every step of the way.

However, it became clear that Commission investigators are not interested in the facts. They have preconceived notions about where their investigation should go and have ignored any exculpatory evidence they obtained.

Further, Commission investigators opted to first contact me in 2022, nearly five years after the events in question took place. Conveniently, investigators have ignored the statute of limitations to ensure their accusations line up with my 2024 re-election.

In my 20 year career with the City, I have never received an ethics violation. When departing city service, I voluntarily and proactively contacted the Ethics Commission to ensure I understood my obligations upon leaving City service.

When I was elected, my wife left behind her successful 20 year career in IT consulting to ensure that there would be no potential or perceived conflict of interest on the chance that her employer would seek a contract with the City. While this has had a major economic impact on my family, my wife and I fully accept being held to the highest standard of accountability.

I also know my actions and stand by my record. I refuse to be bullied by investigators that are seemingly more focused on garnering headlines than pursuing facts, evidence and the truth, even at the expense of people's reputations. For these reasons, I will vigorously fight these baseless accusations and will never apologize for representing the people who live and work in Council District 12.

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Los Angeles City Councilmember John Lee represents the Twelfth Council District in the Northwest San Fernando Valley which includes the communities of Northridge, Chatsworth, Granada Hills, North Hills West, West Hills, Porter Ranch, and Sherwood Forest.