UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

v. Plaintiffs, PLAI PART JUDG
CITY OF SAN DIEGO, [ECF

JOHN DOE #1 and JOHN DOE #2,

Case No. 17-cv-1581-BAS-WVG

ORDER GRANTING PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR PARTIAL SUMMARY JUDGMENT

[ECF No. 24]

Plaintiffs John Doe #1 and John Doe #2 have filed a motion for partial summary judgment. ("MSJ," ECF No. 24.) Plaintiffs seek summary judgment on the first claim in their complaint: their state law preemption claim. Defendant City of San Diego opposes the Motion. ("Opp'n," ECF No. 31.) The Court held oral argument on the Motion on November 19, 2019. For the reasons stated below, the Court **GRANTS** Plaintiffs' Motion.

I. BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2006, California voters passed Proposition 83, "The Sexual Predator Punishment and Control Act: Jessica's Law." Among other things,

Proposition 83 amended California Penal Code section 3003.5, "a statute setting forth restrictions on where certain sex offenders subject to the lifetime registration requirement of section 290 may reside." *In re E.J.*, 47 Cal. 4th 1258, 1263 (2010). As is relevant here and as provided in more detail below, Proposition 83 added subdivisions (b) and (c) to California Penal Code section 3003.5.

On April 13, 2008, the San Diego City Council adopted the Child Protection Act: San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 5, Article 8, Division 6, sections 58.0601–58.0607 (hereinafter, the "Ordinance"). The Council sought to provide "additional restrictions" beyond those provided for in Jessica's Law. Ordinance § 58.0601. Specifically, the Ordinance imposes additional residency restrictions on registered sex offenders. *See id.* § 58.0602 (providing it is unlawful for a registered sex offender to reside within 2000 feet of an: amusement center, arcade, child day care facility, library, playground, park, and school). The Ordinance applies to all "Registered sex offenders," which is defined as "any person required to register pursuant to California Penal Code section 290." *Id.* § 58.0602. Defendant City of San Diego admits that its Ordinance applies to all registered sex offenders, not just those who are on parole. (Opp'n at 11.)

Plaintiffs John Doe #1 and John Doe #2 are two California residents who are required to register as sex offenders pursuant to California Penal Code section 290, et seq. ("Compl.," ECF No. 1, at ¶¶ 6–7.) John Doe #1 resides in the City of San Diego, and John Doe #2 intends to establish a new lawful permanent or temporary residence in the City of San Diego. (*Id.*) Therefore, John Doe #1 alleges he is subject to the Ordinance, and John Doe #2 alleges the Ordinance precludes him from establishing a residence in the City of San Diego. (*Id.*) Plaintiffs challenge the constitutionality of the Ordinance on two grounds. As relevant here, Plaintiffs argue

Penal Code section 290 "imposes upon individuals convicted of certain sex offenses a lifetime requirement that they register with law enforcement in the communities in which they reside." *In re E.J.*, 47 Cal. 4th at 1263.

preemption—that "California state law preempts local governments from imposing residency restrictions on [registered sex offenders] who are not serving terms of parole." (MSJ at 1.)

II. LEGAL STANDARD

"A party may move for summary judgment, identifying each claim or defense—or the part of each claim or defense—on which summary judgment is sought. The court shall grant summary judgment if the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law." Fed. R. Civ. P. 56(a).

III. ANALYSIS

A. Requests for Judicial Notice

Both parties request the Court take judicial notice of various documents. (ECF Nos. 24-2, 31-1.) Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 201, "[a] court shall take judicial notice if requested by a party and supplied with the necessary information." Fed. R. Evid. 201(d). "A judicially noticed fact must be one not subject to reasonable dispute in that it is . . . capable of accurate and ready determination by resort to sources whose accuracy cannot reasonably be questioned." Fed. R. Evid. 201(b). A court may take judicial notice of "matters of public record." *Mack v. S. Bay Beer Distribs.*, 798 F.2d 1279, 1282 (9th Cir. 1986).

The Court first turns to Plaintiffs' requests. Plaintiffs first request the Court judicially notice San Diego's Ordinance. The Court grants judicial notice of the Ordinance. Tollis, Inc. v. County of San Diego, 505 F.3d 935, 938 n.1 (9th Cir. 2007) ("Municipal ordinances are proper subjects for judicial notice."). Further, the Court grants Plaintiffs' request to notice two decisions in other cases. See Holder v. Holder, 305 F.3d 854, 866 (9th Cir. 2002) (taking judicial notice of opinion and briefs filed in another proceeding); United States ex rel. Robinson Rancheria Citizens Council v. Borneo, Inc., 971 F.2d 244, 248 (9th Cir. 1992) (holding courts "may take notice of proceedings in other courts . . . if those proceedings have a direct relation

to matters at issue" (citation omitted)). Plaintiffs' other requests are for the Court to judicially notice: (1) statements made by members of the San Diego City Council during its public meeting on April 2, 2017; (2) a document published by the California Department of Justice, and (3) a report published by the California Sex Offender Management Board. Defendant objects to the Court noticing these documents. As the Court did not consider these documents in analyzing Plaintiffs' Motion, the Court denies the requests as moot.

Defendant requests the Court notice an order issued earlier in this case by Judge Moskowitz before the case was transferred to this Court. A court need not judicially notice orders issued on the docket in the present case, so the Court denies the request as moot. *See Henricks v. Cal. Pub. Utils. Comm'n*, No. 17CV2177-MMA (MDD), 2018 WL 2287346, at *8 (S.D. Cal. May 18, 2018) (citing *Asdar Grp. v. Pillsbury, Madison, & Sutro*, 99 F.3d 289, 290 n.1 (9th Cir. 1996)). Defendant next asks that the Court notice three matters of public record: (1) Supplement to the Statement of Vote from the General Election on November 7, 2006, (2) California General Election Official Voter Information Guide for the November 7, 2006, General Election, and (3) Article 8 of the San Diego Municipal Code. The Court grants the requests and notices these documents as they are matters of public record.

B. Discussion

Section 3003.5 of the Penal Code provides:

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when a person is released on parole after having served a term of imprisonment in state prison for any offense for which registration is required pursuant to Section 290, that person may not, during the period of parole, reside in any single family dwelling with any other person also required to register pursuant to Section 290, unless those persons are legally related by blood, marriage, or adoption. For purposes of this section, "single family dwelling" shall not include a residential facility which serves six or fewer persons.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, it is unlawful for any person for whom registration is required pursuant to Section 290 to

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reside within 2000 feet of any public or private school, or park where children regularly gather.

(c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit municipal jurisdictions from enacting local ordinances that further restrict the residency of any person for whom registration is required pursuant to Section 290.

Cal. Pen. Code § 3003.5.

San Diego enacted its Ordinance pursuant to what it deemed to be power to do so under section 3003.5(c). At first blush and when read without any context, subsection (c) seems to give broad power to a city to enact any law that restricts any registered sex offender. The City did just that, creating an ordinance that imposes additional residency restrictions on all registered sex offenders. Of course, the background and surrounding case law make the issue of whether San Diego may lawfully do so much more nuanced. Plaintiffs' first argument is that California has established a comprehensive scheme for regulating sex offenders and thus has occupied the field.

1. Preemption

The first part of this motion turns on one legal issue: preemption. "Preemption is predominantly a legal question, resolution of which would not be aided greatly by development of a more complete factual record." *Hotel Emps. & Rest. Emps. Int'l Union v. Nev. Gaming Comm'n*, 984 F.2d 1507, 1513 (9th Cir. 1993).

The California Constitution allows cities and counties to enact and enforce local ordinances so long as they are "not in conflict" with the state's "general laws." Cal. Const. Art. XI § 7. "If otherwise valid local legislation conflicts with state law, it is preempted by such law and is void." *Sherwin-Williams Co. v. City of Los Angeles*, 4 Cal. 4th 893, 897 (1993) (quoting *Candid Enters., Inc. v. Grossmont Union High Sch. Dist.*, 39 Cal. 3d 878, 885 (1985).). "A conflict exists if the local legislation 'duplicates, contradicts, or enters an area fully occupied by general law, either expressly or by legislative implication." *Id.* (quoting *Candid*, 39 Cal. 3d at 885). "A local ordinance *enters a field fully occupied* by state law in either of two

situations—when the Legislature 'expressly manifest[s]' its intent to occupy the legal area or when the Legislature 'impliedly' occupies the field." *O'Connell v. City of Stockton*, 41 Cal. 4th 1061, 1068 (2007) (quoting *Sherwin-Williams*, 4 Cal. 4th at 898). A Legislature impliedly preempts a field in three situations:

when "(1) the subject matter has been so fully and completely covered by general law as to clearly indicate that it has become exclusively a matter of state concern; (2) the subject matter has been partially covered by general law couched in such terms as to indicate clearly that a paramount state concern will not tolerate further or additional local action; or (3) the subject matter has been partially covered by general law, and the subject is of such a nature that the adverse effect of a local ordinance on the transient citizens of the state outweighs the possible benefit to the locality."

Id. (quoting *Sherwin-Williams*, 4 Cal. 4th at 898). "If the subject matter or field of the legislation has been fully occupied by the state, there is no room for supplementary or complementary local legislation, even if the subject were otherwise one properly characterized as a 'municipal affair." *People v. Nguyen*, 222 Cal. App. 4th 1168, 1174 (2014) (citations omitted).

Plaintiffs rely heavily on *People v. Nguyen*, 222 Cal. App. 4th 1168 (2014), where the plaintiff there, a sex offender required to register under Penal Code section 290, contested a local ordinance. The plaintiff argued the local ordinance was invalid because "California's comprehensive statutory scheme governing the registration and regulation of sex offenders occupied the field and therefore preempted local ordinances imposing similar requirements." *Id.* at 1173. The court evaluated the local and state ordinances because "the facts and circumstances of each case determine whether the Legislature established a comprehensive statutory scheme that impliedly preempts all local regulation on the subject." *Id.* at 1177. The court "must look to state law to define the relevant field when determining whether the Legislature has fully occupied the area by enacting a comprehensive statutory scheme." *Id.* at 1178. The court evaluated the Sex Offender Punishment, Control,

and Containment Act of 2006, which is wide-ranging, comprehensive, and contains sixty sections. *Id.* at 1180. The court concluded that "the Legislature established a complete system for regulating a sex offender's daily life and manifested a legislative intent to fully occupy the field." *Id.* at 1181.

The *Nguyen* court recognized subsection (c) of section 3003.5. It noted that the subsection "expressly authorizes local regulation" but is "a voter-created exception" and therefore reflects the voters' intent, not the Legislature's intent. *Id.* at 1185 n.5. The subsection "in no way undermines the Legislature's intent to fully occupy the field. If anything, the initiative implicitly recognizes the statutory scheme preempts local regulation unless the voters carve out an exception." *Id.*

One federal court has followed *Nguyen*'s preemption analysis. In *Clymer v*. *City of Adelanto*, CV 16-2535 JGB (JCx), 2017 WL 10591757, at *5 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 18, 2017), a case remarkably similar to this case, the court evaluated *Nguyen* and held "the Legislature intended to fully occupy the field of a sex offender's daily life which includes residency restrictions." Therefore "California's statutory scheme occupies the field of sex offender residency restrictions." *Id*.

Defendant here disagrees with *Nguyen*'s and *Clymer*'s findings of preemption and argues subsection (c) was added as a "clear attempt to avoid the appearance of preemption." (Opp'n at 10.) Defendant argues that section 3003.5(c) "explicitly recogniz[es] the power of local authorities to enact local ordinances that further restrict the residency of registered sex offenders." (*Id.* at 14); *see People ex rel. Deukmejian v. County of Mendocino*, 36 Cal. 3d 476, 485 (1984) ("Preemption by implication of legislative intent may not be found when the Legislature has expressed its intent to permit local regulations."). Plaintiffs agree that subsection (c) "presents a limited exception to the otherwise preempted field of sex offender regulation which authorizes some local control over residency." ("Reply," ECF No. 33, at 10.) But Plaintiffs argue this permission does not mean the field is not preempted.

Indeed, simply because there is a carved-out, voter-created exception allowing

local regulations does not mean that the field cannot still be preempted. See Nguyen, 222 Cal. App. 4th at 1185 n.5; see also Cal. Tow Truck Ass'n v. City & Cty. of San Francisco, 225 Cal. App. 4th 846, 849 (2014) (noting "[s]tate law generally preempts local law in the field of traffic control" but recognizing "[t]here are exceptions" to the preemption and the "Legislature has allowed local regulation of tow truck companies and drivers"); Housing Auth. v. Van de Kamp, 223 Cal. App. 3d 109, 117 (1990) (holding the "Legislature has preempted the field to preclude local regulation" in the area of dissemination of criminal records but noting the "statutory scheme provides narrow exceptions to the general rule" prohibiting disclosure of criminal records). Here, the penal code authorizes local regulation specifically, and the issue is just how far the local regulation may go. And, as the Nguyen court noted, it is a voter-created exception and does not necessarily preclude a finding of state law preemption.

The Court analyzes preemption by reviewing the purpose and context of Jessica's Law. "Where the Legislature has adopted statutes governing a particular subject matter, its intent with regard to occupying the field to the exclusion of all local regulation is not to be measured alone by the language used but by the whole purpose and scope of the legislative scheme." *Am. Fin. Servs. Ass'n v. City of Oakland*, 34 Cal. 4th 1239, 1252 (2005) (quoting *Tolman v. Underhill*, 39 Cal. 2d 708, 712 (1952)). Here, Jessica's Law provides that: "The Legislature finds and declares that a comprehensive system of risk assessment, supervision, monitoring and containment for registered sex offenders residing in California communities is necessary to enhance public safety and reduce the risk of recidivism posed by these offenders." Cal. Pen. Code § 290.03(a) (emphasis added). In creating Jessica's Law, the Legislature created "a standardized, statewide system to identify, assess, monitor and contain known sex offenders for the purpose of reducing the risk of recidivism posed by these offenders, thereby protecting victims and potential victims from future harm." *Id.* at § 290.03(b) (emphasis added). Thus, the text of Jessica's Law

itself shows preemption. And, as the *Nguyen* court noted, Jessica's Law "contains more than 60 sections and made numerous changes to the statutes regulating sex offenders, including adding or amending several . . . statutes." 222 Cal. App. 4th at 1181. This shows an intention by the Legislature to adopt a "general scheme" for the regulation of sex offender registration. *Id*.

The Court therefore finds that state law fully occupies the field of sex offender registration. *See id.* at 1181; *Clymer*, 2017 WL 10591757, at *6. However, Jessica's Law does allow municipalities to enact certain ordinances in this preempted field. *See* Cal. Pen. Code § 3003.5(c). The issue becomes whether San Diego's Ordinance is permissible under the scope of what Jessica's Law allows.

2. "Any Person"

The phrase "any person" is used throughout section 3003.5, and the final subsection of the law provides that municipal jurisdictions may enact "local ordinances that further restrict the residency of <u>any person</u> for whom registration is required pursuant to Section 290." § 3003.5(c) (emphasis added). The parties disagree whether this term encompasses all sex offenders, or only those on parole. The Ordinance applies to all "Registered sex offenders," which is defined as "any person required to register pursuant to California Penal Code section 290." Ordinance § 58.0602. As noted above, this covers all registered sex offenders, even those who are not on parole.

Plaintiffs argue section 3003.5 applies only to registered sex offenders on parole. Thus, when the statute uses the term "any person," it applies to only those on parole. Plaintiffs' position is supported by authority. *See Clymer*, 2017 WL 10591757, at *5 (holding "the state law applies only to parolees"); *People v. Lynch*, 2 Cal. App. 5th 524, 528 (2016) (holding section 3003.5(b) does not apply to sex offenders on probation, but only to sex offenders on parole); *see also Weiss v. City of Maywood*, No. VC066407, at 3 (Cal. Super. Ct. May 31, 2018) (determining that Jessica's Law "authorizes local regulation for sex offenders released on parole" and

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that the relevant local ordinance exceeded the scope of Jessica's Law because the ordinance applied to all sex offenders, "regardless of whether that person is on parole or probation").

This would not be the first time the phrase "any person" has been construed to not refer to just any person. In *In re Derrick B.*, 39 Cal.4th 535, 544 (2006), the state Supreme Court found that the phrase "any person" refers to adult offenders in one subsection, but the same phrase refers to juvenile offenders in another subsection. The court reasoned, "the meaning of the phrase 'any person' depends on its context." *Id.* Of course, the *In re Derrick B.* court was not interpreting the phrase in the context of section 3003.5, but the analysis is notable nonetheless.

People v. Lynch, 2 Cal. App. 5th 524 (2016), also strongly supports Plaintiffs' position. In short, the Lynch court found that the use of the phrase "any person" in 3003.5(b) is limited "to the class of persons identified in [3003.5(a)]—parolees." Id. at 528. Defendant argues Lynch was wrongly decided, pointing out that Lynch relied on a phrase from the California Supreme Court case In re E.J., 47 Cal. 4th 1258 (2010). Defendant argues that the Lynch court took the phrase "out of context" and therefore Lynch is a faulty opinion. (Opp'n at 23.)

The Court disagrees. *In re E.J.* involved four petitioners who were "paroled registered sex offender[s]" challenging enforcement of the residency restrictions against them as a ground for revocation of their parole. The state Supreme Court noted that section 3003.5(b) is "obviously intended to apply to 'persons released on parole." 47 Cal. 4th at 1271 (quoting Cal. Penal Code § 3003.5(a)). This phrase from *In re E.J.* was then relied on by the *Lynch* court, which analyzed the context and entirety of the Penal Code statute. 2 Cal. App. 5th at 528. It reasoned that Jessica's Law amended section 3003.5, which was an existing statute regulating sex offender registrants that was applicable only to parolees. *Id.* The newly amended law retained the original language of section 3003.5, now codified as section 3003.5(a), which limits its coverage to "a person [who] is released on parole after

having served a term of imprisonment in state prison for any offense for which registration is required pursuant to Section 290," i.e, a parolee. *Id.* (quoting Cal. Penal Code § 3003.5(a)). The drafters of Jessica's Law placed (b) immediately following (a). *Id.* The *Lynch* court reasoned that this placement

indicates the intent of Proposition 83's drafters to align and limit the "any person" reference in subdivision (b) to the class of persons identified in subdivision (a)—parolees. Therefore, the language of section 3003.5 as a whole indicates the subdivision (b) residency restriction applies, as does subdivision (a), only to parolees for the period of their parole term.

Id. This Court has no reason to disagree and finds the reasoning of *Lynch* to be strong. *See id.*

Further, *Lynch* referenced *People v. Mosley*, 60 Cal. 4th 1044 (2015). *Mosley* involved very different issues than the present case, however, it is relevant in that the court there noted that the Attorney General representing the State of California "posit[ed] that the residency restrictions of section 3003.5(b) apply only to paroled sex offender registrants while they are on parole, and have no effect on nonparolee registrants." *Id.* at 1054. As the dissent in *Mosley* makes clear, the opinion does not decide "whether section 3003.5(b) applies to sex offenders who are not on parole" and instead assumes so based on the Attorney General's opinion. *Id.* at 1071 (Liu, J., dissenting). Hence, this Court, and the *Lynch* court, cite *Mosely* not for any decision made by the state Supreme Court, but to show that the Attorney General took the position that 3003.5(b) applies only to those on parole.

The court in *Clymer* evaluated the opinion in *Lynch* and found that the decision shows "the state court engaged in its own interpretation of legislative intent." 2017 WL 10591757, at *7. The court further found "it is unnecessary, and would be inappropriate, for this Court to undertake an interpretation anew." *Id.* And although the *Lynch* court evaluated subsection (b) and not section (c), the *Clymer* court determined it must interpret statutes so that they are "consistent with each other" and

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a word "accorded a particular meaning in one part or portion of a law, should be accorded the same meaning in other parts or portions of the law." *Id.* (quoting *Nickelsberg v. Workers' Comp. Appeals Bd.*, 54 Cal. 3d 288, 298 (1991) and *Miranda v. Nat'l Emergency Servs., Inc.*, 35 Cal. App. 4th 894, 905 (1995)). The *Clymer* court therefore found "any person" under subdivision (c) to refer only to parolees. *Id.*

This Court finds the analyses in *Lynch* and *Clymer* to be strong and wellreasoned. The Court is not convinced by Defendant's argument that the reader is to "ignore the other provisions of Penal Code Section 3003.5" when analyzing subsection (c). (See Opp'n at 26.) Instead, the subsection must be read in context, and that context defines the phrase "any person." Defendant lays out various reasons why it believes the intent of the Legislature was for Jessica's Law to apply to all sex offenders, not just those on parole. Defendant ignores one important point: Jessica's Law amended an existing statute regulating sex offender registrants that was applicable only to parolees. Before Proposition 83, only subsection (a) of 3003.5 existed, regulating only persons "released on parole after having served a term of imprisonment in state prison for any offense for which registration is required pursuant to Section 290." See Cal. Pen. Code § 3003.5 (1998), amended by Proposition 83 § 21 (2006). Defendant's argument that the Court is dealing with "a statute which clearly declares itself applicable to 'any' registered sex offender" is simply not true. (See Opp'n at 16.) The prior version of section 3003.5, which is now codified as subsection (a), refers to a specific class of persons, then commands, "that person may not" reside in certain places. Cal. Pen. Code § 3003.5(a) (emphasis added). This is not ambiguous.

And there is no indication that subsections 3003.5(b) and (c) expand the categories of those covered by the original law. They were not placed following subsection (a) by accident. The subsections do not simply "happen[] to be located in a chapter of the Penal Code relating largely to parole" as Defendant suggests. (*See* Opp'n at 16.) Instead, the context cannot be ignored, and the context shows the

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subsections are part of a statute regulating parolees. "If the language is clear and unambiguous there is no need for construction, nor is it necessary to resort to indicia of the intent of the Legislature to interpret the statute." Lungren v. Deukmejian, 45 Cal. 3d 727, 735 (1988). "The meaning of a statute may not be determined from a single word or sentence; the words must be construed in context, and provisions relating to the same subject matter must be harmonized to the extent possible." *Id.* Analyzing the phrase "any person" in context, it is clear that section 3003.5 is meant to apply only to registered sex offenders who are on parole. This extends to section 3003.5(c).

In sum, California state law fully occupies the field of sex offender registration. And while Jessica's Law allows municipalities to enact their own ordinances, this permission is limited to what is described in section 3003.5(c). San Diego's Ordinance, which provides residency restrictions on more people than only sex offenders on parole, enters a field fully occupied by state law and exceeds the scope of what is permitted by state law. The Ordinance is preempted by state law and is void. See O'Connell, 41 Cal. 4th at 1065 (holding any city ordinance that conflicts with state law is preempted and thus void).

IV. **CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, the Court **GRANTS** Plaintiffs' motion for partial summary judgment. Within seven days of the date of this Order, the parties are to file a joint status report indicating whether this case is now resolved and if not, how they intend to proceed.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: November 19, 2019

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