

# Political Grab Bag

By Steve Bagby, Sr., Political Action Committee Chair

## L.A. CITY COUNCIL APPROVES NEW ETHICS COMMISSIONER - - ALEX M. JOHNSON



Earlier this year in September 2023, the Los Angeles City Council approved the appointment of **our own member**, Alex M. Johnson, for a position on the **City's Ethics Commission** after several weeks of intense public scrutiny over the City Council's handling of nominees for the city panel.

As set forth in an article from the *L.A. Times* written by Dakota Smith, ([www.latimes.com/california/story -9/27/23](https://www.latimes.com/california/story-9/27/23)), the City Council voted 10 to 2 to approve Alex Johnson, Vice President of Public Affairs at [Bryson Gillette](#), a consulting firm that also has done campaign work. The firm has handled more than \$2 million worth of work for various campaigns since May 2020, according to city records.

In remarks before the vote, Mr. Johnson appeared to touch on public distrust of City Hall, which has been rocked by a series of recent corruption scandals. "I do not take this nomination lightly," Johnson said. "I fully recognize the inflection point that we are in, the gravity of this moment, and the unique and critical role

that the Ethics Commission plays in ensuring accountability, transparency and trust in government.”

The City Commission proposes policy and issues penalties for campaign finance violations, among other duties. The five-person panel, whose members are nominated by city officials, hadn’t been able to meet because it lacked enough commissioners.

Mr. Johnson’s nomination, put forward by Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, was closely tracked at City Hall after the City Council last month rejected City Controller Kenneth Mejia’s nomination to the Commission. The City Council also voted to reject Reseda Neighborhood Council member Jamie York.

The hearing on Alex Johnson was markedly different from the vote on previous nominees, with several City Councilmembers asking questions of the nominee.

Councilmember Imelda Padilla praised Johnson’s background, which includes working at the California Wellness Foundation, Californians for Safety and Justice and Children’s Defense Fund-California. So it’s an extensive resume,” she said.

Per the article, Councilmember Curren Price, who is fighting charges relating to health insurance payments, also voted for Alex Johnson and felt that Mr. Johnson had the ability to perform his commission work with “integrity” and “seriousness.” *(All the information above was taken from the L.A. Times article written by Dakota Smith) ([www.latimes.com/california/story - 9/27/23](http://www.latimes.com/california/story - 9/27/23))*

On his **Linked In** page, Alex posted as follows: “I am deeply honored and humbled to join the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission. I do not take this appointment lightly, nor the confidence that Council President Pro Tem [Marqueece Harris-Dawson](#) has placed in me by making the nomination or that the Los Angeles City Council has demonstrated by voting in support of my nomination. We are at an inflection point, and I fully recognize the gravity of this moment, as well as the unique and critical role that the ethics commission plays in ensuring accountability, transparency, and trust in government. It is not perfect but it is essential. I care deeply about this city, about our government, about who serves

and how they serve - and in spite of all that has transpired in Los Angeles, I have not given up whatsoever on this city that I love. I am honored to serve.”

**Congratulations to our dear Alex. He continues to soar and we can all feel proud about his many accomplishments!!!**

**Thank you for reading!**

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