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Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee
Energy and Environment Committee
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

April 4, 2014

Re: City Street Tree Policy, CF #14-0019

Honorable Councilmembers:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc. represents 44 resident and homeowner associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. The mission of the Federation is to preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles.

We write to support Councilmember Mike Bonin's January 7, 2014 motion (CF #14-0019) for the Department of Street Services' Urban Forestry Division (Urban Forestry) and the City Attorney to report back to Council on various matters concerning tree trimming on City property and the imposition of fines and other disincentives to the violation of the City's "Street Tree Policies" (the Motion). The Federation also asks that the City amend its Street Tree Policies to include additional protections.

The Motion would require Urban Forestry to report back to the Council regarding its procedures for issuing contracts for tree trimming work and the measures in place to ensure that trimming and pruning work done by contractors complies with the City's Street Tree Policies—including the prohibition against the practice of "tree topping." The Motion would also require the City Attorney to report back on recommended actions, including monetary fines and prohibition from consideration for future contracting work to ensure that contractors properly maintain and prune street trees.

The Federation fully supports this Motion as a first step to the eventual amendment to and strengthening of the City's Street Tree Policies. The Federation also asks that the Street Tree Policies be amended to (1) unambiguously preclude contractors for the City of Los Angeles, the Department of Water and Power (DWP), the Fire Department, and any other agency over which the Council has jurisdiction from engaging in tree trimming practices that are prohibited under the Street Tree Policies or other applicable laws, including California Government Code Section 53067, prohibiting the practice of tree "topping" or "heading"; (2) require a certified arborist who is registered with Urban Forestry to be on site to protect the health of trees during any trimming on public property subject to the City's oversight or control, including property owned or controlled by DWP; and (3) require the City to conduct public outreach in the community where it plans to engage in such tree trimming efforts.

Sincerely,

Marian Dodge
Marian Dodge

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