



PRESS RELEASE

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EL MONTE AND REGIONAL AGENCIES CALL FOR AN END TO STATE BUDGET TAKEAWAYS

El Monte, Calif. – The City of El Monte hosted the *San Gabriel Valley State of the Region* press conference on October 14, 2010, at 10 a.m., to send a unified message to Sacramento: “No more State raids!” State budget takeaways have begun to jeopardize public safety, emergency response, transportation, transit, economic development, jobs, and the general quality of life throughout the San Gabriel Valley. The press conference was held at the Los Angeles County Fire Station 166, at 3615 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte, CA 91731.

“We held this press conference today because we want to send a clear message to Sacramento politicians that enough is enough,” said El Monte Councilmember Juventino “J” Gomez. “We understand our state budget problems are difficult to solve, but when public safety services, educational programs, or other vital city agencies are being limited because money allocated for each is taken by the state, our residents and our communities suffer greatly. We cannot continue to sit back and allow this to happen.”

Eight speakers, from various State- and City-run agencies, spoke regarding the impacts and reductions the State raids have had on the City of El Monte and on other local government entities. The speakers in attendance included Mayor Pro Tem Patricia Wallach; Lee Baca, Sheriff of Los Angeles County; P. Michael Freeman, Fire Chief of Los Angeles County; Tom Armstrong, Police Chief of El Monte Police Department; John Fasana, Metro Board Member; Kevin McDonald, Deputy Director of Foothill Transit; Cynthia Kurtz, President/CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership; and Jeff Seymour, Superintendent of the El Monte City School District.

In May of 2010, El Monte’s Community Redevelopment Agency was forced to turn over \$2 million to comply with provisions of ABX4-26, a bill passed last year as a part of the state budget. The bill allowed the State of California to take \$1.7 billion in local redevelopment funding, which pays for local job creation, economic development projects, as well as street improvement projects. The funds were used to help offset state obligations in the 2009-2010 state budget. An additional \$350 million could be taken from this year’s budget as well.

“The State cannot continue to solve its problems on the backs of cities and local agencies,” said El Monte Mayor Andre Quintero. “We are on the front lines, providing basic services to the families and businesses who are the backbone of our community and our economy. With each year, more money is shifted to pay for state programs, moving local dollars farther and farther away from the people who are generating them and who need them. This must stop.”

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The City of El Monte, located in Southern California, is committed to improving the quality of life for its citizens and strives to provide its community personalized service, uncompromising commitment, and individualized accountability. For information on the City of El Monte, please call 626-580-2001 or visit www.elmonteca.gov.