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To: supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org; [CITY COUNCIL \(INCL. CMO STAFF\)](#)
Subject: City Council meeting 9/3/24, Agenda Item #20, File #24-622
Date: Friday, August 30, 2024 3:11:26 PM

Meeting Date: _____
Agenda Item No. 20 (24-622)

TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
AND CITY ATTORNEY MICHAEL GATES:

AB 1955 DOES NOT PREVENT educators from informing parents of their child's gender expression and identity. It only prohibits school boards from FORCING teachers to out students against their will.

Any ordinance the City Council may approve declaring Huntington Beach a "Parents' Right to Know City" is unenforceable since the city has no control over schools within its borders. The ordinance goes against state law, charter city or not. The Council majority and City Attorney Gates need to stop wasting taxpayer money on these ridiculous "culture war" fights.

I recommend a "No" vote on this item and am absolutely certain you don't care.

"City attorneys should not get involved in city council politics to preserve their role as neutral officers charged with rendering impartial opinions on legal matters. Therefore, council members should not be offended if the city attorney does not attend their fundraisers or other political events." (League of California Cities, "Counsel and Council: A Guide to Building a Productive City Attorney-City Council Relationship," 102 pages)

But what if the city attorney DOES attend their fundraisers and other political events, and indeed even campaigns with them, endorses inexperienced/unqualified candidates whose political views coincide with his own, and publicly celebrates their wins? Which is exactly what's going on in Huntington Beach with City Attorney Michael Gates.

After a contentious relationship with the previous City Council, a new majority whose extremist conservative political views align closely with those of Mr. Gates now sits on the dais, and the minority members have been sidelined. Immediately after taking office, the self-named "Fab Four" gave Mr. Gates free rein and bestowed on him a nearly \$100,000 raise, making him at that time the second highest-paid of any elected city attorney in the state. Why? A generous reward for helping them get elected? Incentive to assist them in implementing their draconian Project 2025 agenda?

The pugnacious Mr. Gates spends his days fighting his archenemies, Governor Gavin Newsom and Attorney General Rob Bonta, on just about everything — all with the City Council majority's blessing and at taxpayer expense. He makes guest appearances on TV and podcasts, self-promoting

his ongoing battles against the State, perhaps with aspirations of running for governor (as one chyron suggested) or a position in a potential second Trump administration. He crows on social media about his successes (conveniently downplaying or omitting losses and setbacks, or the cost of this endless fighting) and has bamboozled way too many HB citizens into believing he's always fighting for us and can do no wrong. The annual budget for the City Attorney's office has now ballooned to over \$4 million for 2024/25.

His "legal opinions" tend to favor the Council majority, as when he allowed campaign signs for the November election to be posted even before the March election, based on a technicality. Thus, his three hand-picked MAGA City Council candidates were given advance name recognition months before any other candidates. He is also instrumental in crafting controversial agenda items, charter amendments, ordinances, policy revisions, and resolutions that are moving our city backward.

In a stunning lack of transparency, Mr. Gates fought against releasing the explosive details of the secret Pacific Airshow settlement he and the City Council majority had approved. They just rolled over and gave away the farm for up to 40 years, costing the city millions, while boasting "We saved the Airshow!" Why has our City Attorney not yet sued Amplify Energy, the oil company that caused the spill? When pressured to explain, Mr. Gates proclaimed there was no wrongdoing and said anyone who disagrees is free to file a complaint with any of several named entities. Some people did so. Mr. Gates is now in persecuted victim mode, rallying his ill-informed loyalists by claiming on social media that the state government has been weaponized against him and "our precious city," prompted and fed by attacks from within city leadership.

City Attorney Michael Gates and the "Fab Four" should not expect that we will sit quietly by while they continue to swing their ideological wrecking ball at Huntington Beach, ruining our reputation and quality of life, and wasting an enormous amount of taxpayer money while doing so.

Michele Burgess
Huntington Beach resident since 1961

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Attachments: [Screen Shot 2024-08-30 at 3.29.17 PM.png](#)
[Screen Shot 2024-08-30 at 3.29.17 PM.png](#)

To the MAGA 4+1:

At the August 6 meeting you claimed your ridiculous and unlawful ordinance would apply to educators in schools, now you sneak in extra language also applying it to those who work in the city's libraries, parks, recreational and community service facilities and programs, ad infinitum. Did you think no one would notice? We are watching you every minute because you cannot be trusted.

What the hell is wrong with you people? This isn't Nazi Germany, where friends, relatives, and fellow citizens are charged with outing Jews. Just leave people alone and stop imposing your homophobic crap on the rest of us. LGBTQ+ individuals have human rights, too, including the right to dignity, equality, and yes, even privacy. Mind your own damn business. Take care of your own intolerant selves and leave everyone else alone.

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1.23.020 **Huntington Beach is a “Parents’ Right to Know” City.**

- A. For the purposes of this Chapter, “Parents” shall refer to parents and/or legal guardians.
- B. Parents have a right to know about their child’s “sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression” without the interference, prohibition, and/or inhibition presented by AB 1955.
- C. Based on the findings in Section 1.23.010 above, the City of Huntington Beach, California is hereby declared a “Parents’ Right to Know” city.
- D. No educators in the City of Huntington Beach, including but not limited to instructors, counselors, or other adults entrusted with the teaching or caring of children, who work in the City’s Libraries, Parks, City Recreational Facilities, Community Services Facilities, or other City facilities or City sponsored programming shall withhold any information related to a child’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression to Parents of said children with or without the child’s consent.