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Statement of Gloria Allred

On July 22, 2013, we filed the first and to date only sexual harassment lawsuit on behalf of Irene McCormack Jackson, Mayor Filner's former Communications Director accusing San Diego Mayor Bob Filner of engaging in numerous acts of sexual harassment against Ms. McCormack Jackson. We sued the Mayor and the City of San Diego which failed to provide a workplace free of sexual harassment.

After we filed numerous women came forward to also complain of sexual harassment by the Mayor.

For example, on August 7th I had a news conference with my client Michelle Tyler and U.S. Marine Katherine Ragazzino about a meeting with Filner in which the Mayor rubbed Ms. Tyler's arm and implied that he would help solve Ragazzino's issue with the VA only if Tyler agreed to attend a public event with him or have dinner with him. At that time I again urged the Mayor to resign.

On August 15th I had a third news conference with my client Peggy Shannon, a great-grandmother, who Mayor Filner kissed on her lips and repeatedly asked out while she worked at City Hall. Once again I demanded that the Mayor resign.

On Sunday, August 17th I spoke at a public rally and urged the Mayor to resign or to be recalled. .

On Monday, August 19th 2013, my client, Irene McCormack Jackson and I, participated in mediation to attempt to resolve our sexual harassment lawsuit against the City and the Mayor. Mayor Filner was present along with his attorneys and the City of San Diego was represented by the City Attorney and two members of the City Council. The mediation was conducted by Judge Larry Irving. At the request of Judge Irving and pursuant to confidentiality provisions that govern mediations, I will not discuss what occurred at the mediation.

I am coming forward today because tomorrow the City Council in closed session is going to be asked to approve a deal which resulted from our lawsuit. We do not know the details of the reported deal and we have not approved. We are therefore concerned that the City Council may be voting on this deal in a vacuum and that it may contain terms which we and the taxpayers would find abhorrent.

On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week the mediation continued. Yesterday it was widely reported in the media that a deal had been reached between the City and the Mayor which will be considered by the City Council tomorrow. I would emphasize that I do not have any information as to the details of whatever deal has been reached between the City and the Mayor, both of whom continue to be defendants in our lawsuit. However, it has been reported that the deal will include the Mayor's resignation. While we strongly support the Mayor's resignation we would hope that whatever resolution has been reached between the City and the Mayor does not include the payment of any of the Mayor's legal fees, past or future or any payment to him whatsoever.

Since the San Diego City Council is being asked to approve a settlement with the Mayor, we think it is fair to assume that it must involve some payment to him. If "the deal" only involved his resignation, there would be no need for the City Council to approve it. The City Council has already unanimously asked the Mayor to resign, and their approval for his resignation is not necessary anyway.

We believe that given the importance of these issues, there should first be an opportunity for San Diegans to speak to the City Council at public hearing on the issue of whether or not it would be appropriate to make a gift of taxpayer funds to Mayor Filner as part of a deal for him to resign. We think that no such gift should be made.

The City Council has previously rejected the Mayor's request that the City pay his legal fees in our lawsuit. We do not think that the City should help the Mayor fund a fight against our courageous client, Irene McCormack Jackson who was sexually harassed on her job while working for the Mayor and the City of San Diego.

The Mayor's resignation should not be bought at the expense of his victims. It would be morally wrong and hypocritical for the City to align itself with the Mayor by helping him pay his legal fees to defend against Ms. McCormack Jackson's allegations and the lawsuit which we have filed against him and the City. Why should the City of San Diego pay the Mayor's legal fees or any amount of money to him or on his behalf to help him in defending against our sexual harassment lawsuit and his reprehensible conduct.

The City Council should have the courage of its convictions and stand firm in its resolve to make the Mayor pay his own legal fees and should not authorize any payment to him whatsoever.

The majority of San Diegans agree that the Mayor must go. However, his leaving the City should not leave a permanent stain on the City's reputation by the City Council facilitating the Mayor's leaving by entering into a callous and unholy agreement with him. If the deal requires that the City Council pay him one dollar then I, for one, think they should vote against it. There should be no payoff for Mayor Filner.

It would be a slap in the face to the Mayor's many victims to see him get anything from the City of San Diego. His parting gift should be "good riddance" instead of a handout.

I am here today with the Mayor's former fiancée, Bronwyn Ingram. She is here with me to ask the Mayor to resign without condition. She also believes that the taxpayers of the City of San Diego should not be forced to pay even one cent of payment to the Mayor to assist him against the victim of his sexual harassment.

Justice requires that the Mayor resign, but there should also be justice for the Mayor's victims.

Gloria Allred
Attorney at Law
Representing Bronwyn Ingram
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