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## **Statement of Gloria Allred**

On July 22, 2013, Irene McCormack Jackson and I announced that Irene had filed a sexual harassment lawsuit against then Mayor of San Diego Bob Filner, and the City of San Diego which employed him.

Today we are very happy to confirm, that we have agreed to a settlement of \$250,000 to resolve Irene's case against both the City and Bob Filner.

In our lawsuit we alleged that Irene had been the Mayor's Communications Director and during the term of her employment was forced to endure being placed by Mayor Filner in a "Filner headlock" while he made degrading and humiliating sexual comments to her.

In addition, Irene alleged that she was required to suffer Mayor Filner telling her that she should work without her panties on, that he wanted to see her naked, that he could not wait to consummate their relationship and that he wanted to marry her.

Further, Irene was subjected to Mayor Filner's demanding kisses, and on one occasion, when he tried to kiss her and she told him to leave her office immediately, the Mayor responded that he was the Mayor and that he could be wherever he wanted, whenever he wanted.

In June 2013, after it became apparent to Irene that Mayor Filner would not acknowledge or change his behavior, she felt that it was necessary for her to resign as Communications Director.

In the sexual harassment lawsuit that we filed, we sought damages according to proof at trial. Recently the trial was set for February 2015 in this case.

Yesterday, the San Diego City Council agreed to settle Irene's case for \$250,000. San Diego City Attorney, Jan Goldsmith, announced the settlement of our case.

This settlement is a vindication of Irene's claims and it is an outstanding result for her. The law in California imposes strict liability on an employer if an employee can prove that she was a victim of sexual harassment. Irene did have evidence of her allegations. In addition, she suffered serious emotional harm as a result of the Mayor's continuous sexual harassment.

While we believed that a jury might have awarded her an amount in excess of the amount she agreed to in the settlement, Irene felt that it was important that the City of San Diego which she loves, be able to put this lawsuit to rest. In addition, Irene was ready to go on with her life without the constant reminders in litigation of Mayor Filner and his unwanted and unwelcome sexual advances towards her while she was his Communications Director.

With this settlement, Irene can begin a new chapter in her life.

We thank the San Diego City Council and San Diego City Attorney, Jan Goldsmith, for resolving Irene's case in a positive and fair manner. While it is not easy for an employer, (in this case the City of San Diego) to decide to pay a settlement, it was the right thing to do in this case, and this settlement also avoided the risks of trial which could have included a much larger judgement which might have been awarded against them.

We also wish to thank retired Judge Irving who helped to mediate and ultimately settle this case. He worked tirelessly to resolve this matter in a fair and equitable manner and we appreciated his wise counsel and assistance.

Finally, and most importantly, I wish to thank my client, Irene. Irene is a profile in courage. She took the risk to speak out publicly as a victim of Mayor Filner and speak truth to power before any other victim would or did. As Eleanor Roosevelt said:

*“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face . . . You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”*

Irene’s example inspired and empowered other victims to come forward in unprecedented numbers, so that San Diego could judge for itself if Mayor Filner had or had not acted in a sexually inappropriate manner with many women.

In addition, because Irene filed her lawsuit, a mediation of her case took place. As a result of that mediation, the Mayor agreed to resign. Irene deserves a great deal of credit for her key role in ending the term and the nightmare of Mayor Bob Filner as San Diego’s Mayor.

Irene is a hero and my law partners and I wish her every success in the future. Because of her courage, we were able to achieve justice in her case. We look forward to the next chapter in Irene’s life. Whatever she chooses to do, we know that she has made her story and that she will be an asset to any employer who is fortunate enough to be able to employ her.

Thank you Irene. We wish you continued success.

Gloria Allred  
Attorney at Law  
Representing Irene McCormack Jackson  
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