



May 6, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mayor Fred Jung
Mayor Pro Tem Shana Charles
Council Member Nicholas Dunlap
Council Member Jamie Valencia
Council Member Ahmad Zahra
Fullerton City Council
303 W. Commonwealth Avenue
Fullerton, California 92832
Email: CouncilMembers@cityoffullerton.com

Re: Agenda Item No 10: Rescinding Resolution 2025-023: Material Display and Distribution in City Facilities

Dear City Council members:

As organizations dedicated to protecting journalists' rights, we write to state our opposition to Fullerton's ban on newspapers at City Hall and other government buildings.

Press freedom means little if people don't have access to the journalism they want to read. News publishers have come to depend on their newspapers' availability at government buildings to inform the public. Their readership will suffer if the ban is allowed to stand, and so will the public discourse in Fullerton.

The ban sends the message, whether intended or not, that the city is hostile to the free press and discourages criticism of its policies, preferring that residents only read government-approved messaging. Those harmed will include not only professional journalists but student reporters like those who write for The Daily Titan. Fullerton's most vulnerable residents, including seniors and those without reliable internet access, will be left less informed, as recent news coverage and commentary make clear.¹

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<https://fullertonobserver.com/2025/04/22/local-newspapers-get-a-second-chance-to-lift-the-censorship-policy-at-may-6-council-meeting/>
https://dailytitan.com/opinion/opinion-fullerton-city-councils-recent-policy-should-not-come-at-the-cost-of-public-awareness/article_af08bc4c-e340-4427-8db7-117e22ee706d.html
https://dailytitan.com/news/fullerton-city-council-to-revisit-publication-policy/article_39c06c80-990f-4b2f-b014-34dd9b34a827.html

This is not how the city should be conducting itself just a few short years after its misguided litigation against journalists for accessing documents the city itself made available.² As you know, that embarrassing ordeal concluded with the city paying damages and attorney's fees to the journalists pursuant to a settlement.

To the extent that the ban was motivated by dissatisfaction with coverage by particular outlets or reporters, it might even expose the city to further liability. That scenario is particularly concerning in light of reports that the ban came in response to a request for a news rack by Friends for Fullerton's Future, the same outlet whose reporters were the subject of the prior settlement.

If city officials don't like what the press has to say, they have ample platforms to make their own case to the public. Impeding newspaper publishers from reaching their readers will only cause the public to wonder what the city is hiding. We hope you will reverse course.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

FIRST AMENDMENT COALITION

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<https://pressfreedomtracker.us/all-incidents/appellate-judge-rules-california-blog-can-publish-but-not-destroy-city-records/>