



Peninsula Community Planning Board
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March 11, 2026
City of San Diego Rules Committee
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: Item 4 – Amendments to the Rules of Council Under State Senate Bill 707

Dear Chair and Members of the Rules Committee,

The Peninsula Community Planning Board (PCPB) respectfully submits this letter in opposition to the proposed limitation that would allow only groups of five or more individuals to cede speaking time during public comment. The PCPB supports the practice of ceding time, but it must be made available to all members of the public, including individuals acting independently. Restricting this option to groups of five or more would unnecessarily limit the ability of residents to participate effectively in the public process.

PCPB strongly supports the ceding of time both virtually and in-person. However, limiting ceding of time to groups of five or more will disenfranchise community members who are not affiliated with formal organizations or coalitions. Many residents participate in civic matters as individuals rather than as members of established groups. The general allowance of one minute per speaker does not provide adequate time for speakers to address many of the complex and controversial topics heard at Council. Under the proposed rule, these residents would be unable to combine speaking time with others who share their concerns, thereby reducing their opportunity to fully present their perspectives. This limitation risks discouraging participation and narrowing the diversity of voices heard by the Council.

Allowing all community members to cede speaking time, regardless of group size, promotes a more robust and meaningful public discussion. When individuals can voluntarily yield their time to another speaker, it allows all individuals to participate in the public process. This practice strengthens public engagement and helps ensure that government decisions are informed by inclusive community input.

Additionally, the proposed requirement that speakers submit a form to the City Clerk 48 hours in advance to pool or cede time may further limit public participation. Council docket information is required to be released 72 hours in advance, many times on Fridays for Monday Council meetings. Many residents decide to attend meetings or comment on agenda items after reviewing materials shortly before a meeting. The proposed 48-hour advance filing requirement could prevent otherwise engaged community members from participating in the time-ceding process and would add an unnecessary procedural barrier to civic engagement.

For these reasons, the Peninsula Community Planning Board respectfully urges the Rules Committee to maintain a policy that allows any member of the public to cede speaking time without restrictive group thresholds or advance filing requirements. Preserving broad access to public comment will help ensure that the City's decision-making process remains inclusive and responsive to the communities it serves.

Sincerely,

Peninsula Community Planning Board
Long Range Planning Committee