

Senate Bill No. 329

CHAPTER 27

An act to amend Section 36516 of the Government Code, relating to local government.

[Approved by Governor June 29, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State June 29, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 329, Dodd. Cities: city council members: compensation.

Existing law authorizes a city council to enact an ordinance to provide each member of the city council a salary based upon the population of the city, as specified. Existing law authorizes that amount to be increased by the city council by an amount that does not exceed 5% for each calendar year from the operative date of the last adjustment of the salary that is in effect when the increase is enacted. Existing law provides for the procedures by which a city may enact ordinances.

This bill would increase the maximum amount of salary, based upon the population of the city, that may be approved by an ordinance passed by the city council, as specified. The bill would authorize the salary of council members to be increased beyond the specified maximums to an amount not exceeding the greater of either 5% for each calendar year from the operative date of the last adjustment of the salary in effect when the ordinance or amendment is enacted, or an amount equal to inflation since January 1, 2024, based upon the California Consumer Price Index, which shall not exceed 10% for each calendar year. The bill would require the city council to consider the adoption of an ordinance to increase council member compensation in open session during at least 2 regular meetings of the city council.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The compensation schedule for general law cities has not been adjusted since 1984, meaning that city council compensation has not kept pace with inflation.

(b) Allowing cities to adjust their compensation for inflation since 1984 may help city councils become more diverse because increased compensation can help individuals from across different income levels receive sufficient income from their service to help ensure that they can continue to serve the public and support their families.

SEC. 2. Section 36516 of the Government Code is amended to read:

36516. (a) (1) A city council may enact an ordinance providing that each member of the city council shall receive a salary based on the population of the city as set forth in paragraph (2).

(2) The salaries approved by ordinance under paragraph (1) shall be as follows:

(A) In cities up to and including 35,000 in population, up to and including nine hundred fifty dollars (\$950) per month.

(B) In cities over 35,000 up to and including 50,000 in population, up to and including one thousand two hundred seventy-five dollars (\$1,275) per month.

(C) In cities over 50,000 up to and including 75,000 in population, up to and including one thousand six hundred dollars (\$1,600) per month.

(D) In cities over 75,000 up to and including 150,000 in population, up to and including one thousand nine hundred dollars (\$1,900) per month.

(E) In cities over 150,000 up to and including 250,000 in population, up to and including two thousand five hundred fifty dollars (\$2,550) per month.

(F) In cities over 250,000 population, up to and including three thousand two hundred dollars (\$3,200) per month.

(3) For the purposes of this subdivision, the population of a city shall be determined by the last preceding federal census, or a subsequent census, or estimate validated by the Department of Finance.

(4) The salary of council members may be increased beyond the amount provided in this subdivision by an ordinance or by an amendment to an ordinance, but the amount of the increase shall not exceed the greater of either of the following:

(A) An amount equal to 5 percent for each calendar year from the operative date of the last adjustment of the salary in effect when the ordinance or amendment is enacted.

(B) An amount equal to inflation since January 1, 2024, based upon the California Consumer Price Index, which shall not exceed 10 percent for each calendar year.

(5) No ordinance shall be enacted or amended to provide automatic future increases in salary.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), at any municipal election, the question of whether city council members shall receive a salary for services, and the amount of that salary, may be submitted to the electors. If a majority of the electors voting at the election favor it, all of the council members shall receive the salary specified in the election call. The salary of council members may be increased beyond the amount provided in this section or decreased below the amount in the same manner.

(c) Unless specifically authorized by another statute, a city council may not enact an ordinance providing for compensation to city council members in excess of that authorized by the procedures described in subdivisions (a) and (b). For the purposes of this section, compensation includes payment for service by a city council member on a commission, committee, board, authority, or similar body on which the city council member serves. If the other statute that authorizes the compensation does not specify the amount

of compensation, the maximum amount shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) per month for each commission, committee, board, authority, or similar body.

(d) Any amounts paid by a city for retirement, health and welfare, and federal social security benefits shall not be included for purposes of determining salary under this section, provided that the same benefits are available and paid by the city for its employees.

(e) Any amounts paid by a city to reimburse a council member for actual and necessary expenses pursuant to Section 36514.5 shall not be included for purposes of determining salary pursuant to this section.

(f) A city council member may waive any or all of the compensation permitted by this section.

(g) (1) For the purposes of this section, a city council shall consider the adoption of an ordinance to increase compensation in open session during at least two regular meetings of the city council.

(2) At the first meeting, the city council shall present the proposed ordinance, which shall include findings demonstrating the need for the increased compensation. The ordinance shall not be adopted at the first meeting.

(3) At least seven days after the first meeting, the city council shall hold a second meeting to consider whether to adopt the ordinance.