



Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission 2017 Annual Report

2017 Commissioners

Commission Chair

Ronnie Jayne
Second District

Commission Vice Chair

Mike Gomez
First District

First District

Farrell J. Chiles
Mark Ramos

Second District

Dennis Arguelles
Kisheen Wayne Tulloss

Third District

Susan R. Jerich
Joan Patsy Ostroy
Ross Viselman

Fourth District

Charline Sistrunk
Patrick Wilson

Fifth District

Vivian Chan
Daniel Deng

Los Angeles County

Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission

History of the Commission

The Los Angeles County Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission was established in 1980 and has been continued pursuant to Board order by Chapter 3.13 of the Los Angeles County Code. The commission is a non-regulatory body, the purpose of which is to represent the interests of consumers to the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and to the Board of Supervisors.

The commission has provided valuable linkages between the Board of Supervisors, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and various community groups and organizations invested in consumer issues. The commissioners' collective experience as consumers, members of the business community, and leaders in their own communities has been a valuable resource providing important assistance to the Department.

The Duties of the Commission

The Commission plays a valuable role in making sure the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs is helping consumers in the best possible way. The Duties of the Commission include:

- Ascertaining the needs of consumers, and advising the Director of its findings as appropriate
- Advising the Director concerning the protection and promotion of the interests of consumers
- Advising the Director regarding the need for changes in procedures, programs or legislation in order to further the interests of consumers
- Discussing with the Director methods for more effective consumer education
- Studying and reporting on matters referred for review by the Director or the Board of Supervisors
- Rendering to the Director and the Board of Supervisors at least once each calendar year a report of its activities and to testifying upon request.

Organization

The Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission is comprised of fifteen members, three from each Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County, appointed by the Board of Supervisors. In addition to the main body of the Advisory Commission, the Commission includes three standing committees.

Key Accomplishments in 2017

The Commission was extremely proactive in identifying issues impacting consumers in their local communities and throughout California. The Commission particularly focused on issues that targeted some of the most vulnerable consumer populations, including senior citizens, low-income residents, women, and children. Commissioners often brought information from the community and mainstream news sources to the Department for further research and review.

Key topics discussed by the Commission included the potential consumer safety concerns resulting from the passage of the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (Proposition 64), the function of the newly established Office of Immigrant Affairs, protections for job seekers such as “Ban the Box”, developments in the collaborative efforts to address homelessness in Los Angeles County, and the impact of Proposition 47 on victim restitution settlements.

In addition to various consumer legislation topics, the Commission also supported the development and expansion of County programs and services, such as the Center for Financial Empowerment (CFE). The CFE, which is currently in its sophomore year, serves the most vulnerable populations of Los Angeles County, and provides financial literacy workshops to improve access and opportunities for disadvantaged communities. In 2017, the CFE launched the BankOn program which allows individuals with negative banking histories a “second chance” at banking, reducing their reliance on high interest, fee-based prepaid debit card accounts.

Finally, the Commission continued to advocate for the use of social and digital media platforms to reach a greater population of consumers. The Commission has frequently advocated for video recording and live streamed content. The Commission is happy to report that the July 2017 in-district meeting was livestream on the DCBA Facebook page.

Standing Committees

There are currently three Standing Committees of the Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission. The standing committee include the Executive Committee, the Legislative Committee, and the Public Information Committee. Each committee meets every other month, alternating with the Regular Commission meetings to focus on specific aspects of Consumer Affairs in Los Angeles County.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee proposes strategic direction, and reviews the administrative policy, guidelines, and standards for the Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission. The Executive Committee, whose membership includes the Commission Chair, Commission Vice Chair, and each Committee Chair, work together to devise approaches to increase the presence and effectiveness of the Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission.

The 2017 Chair of the Executive Committee was Commissioner Ronnie Jayne

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee ensures the protection of Los Angeles County consumers by monitoring and proposing improvements to existing legislation and recommending new policies as the needs of consumers continues to evolve. The Legislative Committee has reviewed a variety of legislation proposed in 2017 including:

- Assembly Bill 1008 (AB 1008) that address employment discrimination based on conviction history, colloquially identified by the tagline “Ban the Box”
- Emerging legislation concerning medical and recreational cannabis licensing and consumption, particularly the development of consumer-driven quality control standards
- Regulations requiring food safety certificates for grocery delivery services, as well as the emerging “meal prep” industry.

The 2017 Chair of the Legislative Committee was Commissioner Mark Ramos

Public Information Committee

The Public Information Committee identifies, facilitates and enhances public outreach and dialogue to the diverse communities served by Los Angeles County. The Public Information Committee has advocated for increased access to consumer services and consumer education- including the addition of additional languages for department communications- and has championed the increased use of technology and media to reach the large consumer population of Los Angeles County. The Public Information Committee also leads the organization of commission-sponsored events, which aims to bring consumer education and resources into the community in an accessible format.

The 2017 Chair of the Public Information Committee was Commissioner Patsy Ostroy

Regular Meetings

The Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission held six meetings in 2017. Regular Meetings were held on the third Thursday of every other month in the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration. Notable agenda items included the County's Center for Financial Empowerment and the introduction of the BankOn program, concerns regarding the consumer rights of undocumented immigrants during the repeal of the Federal DACA program, discussion items on various employment discrimination practices, and consumer protections for vulnerable populations.



Community Meetings

In addition to the regular meetings held in the Hall of Administration, the Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission also holds 1-2 meetings in alternate locations throughout the Supervisorial Districts each year. In 2017, the Commission held a meeting in the Fifth Supervisorial District, in the city of Pasadena.

The purpose of the community based meeting is increase the visibility of the Commission, and to educate the community about the services provided by the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and participating local agencies.

For the Commissioners, these meetings provided the commission an opportunity to research issues in their representing district, and develop materials catered to those constituents.



SAVE THE DATE! **THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2017** **COMMUNITY TOWN HALL** **& RESOURCE FAIR**

PASADENA CITY COLLEGE
1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91106

Hosted by the County of Los Angeles Consumer
Affairs Advisory Commission (CAAC)

CAAC works with the County of Los Angeles Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) to enhance consumer protection in Los Angeles County. We will be sharing important information, exhibits, and resources with attendees.

You can speak with Commissioners and DCBA consumer-protection experts about emerging consumer issues in Pasadena and neighboring communities.

PROTECT YOURSELF!

Learn about the top
consumer scams affecting
Pasadena residents

Get assistance with
housing concerns including:
Landlord-tenant issues
Loan modification
assistance
Solar panel installation
And much more!

Information on community
resources and additional
county services



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**CONSUMER &
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**



LOS ANGELES COUNTY CONSUMER AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

For more information contact:
DCBA_Commissions@dcbalacounty.gov

Phone: (213) 974-1452

Toll Free: (800) 593-8222

The community meeting of 2017 was held in the Fifth District, in the city of Pasadena. In preparation for the event, the Commission partnered with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to research prevalent issues affecting the constituents in the Fifth Supervisorial District in Los Angeles County. The resulting event was a Consumer Protection Town Hall and Resource Fair including additional information on Landlord-Tenant concerns, and Immigration Fraud. DCBA prepared presentations and assembled resources to address the needs of the local community.


*The County of Los Angeles Consumer Affairs
Advisory Commission Invites You to :*


Community Town Hall & Resource Fair




Discuss emerging consumer issues with consumer protection experts and advocates in Los Angeles County. The event will include presentations, exhibits and resources from local community and government agencies on topics including:

- Top Consumer Scams
- Landlord-Tenant Issues
- Loan Modification Assistance
- Solar Panel Installation
- Consumer Protection for Seniors
- and Much More!

 **Thursday, July 20, 2017**

 6:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Town Hall & Resource Fair

 **Pasadena City College, Creveling Lounge**
1570 E Colorado Blvd, Pasadena CA 91106

 For more information email
DCBA_Commissions@DCBA.lacounty.gov



The Commission conducted their July 2017 meeting in the City of Pasadena to hear from the constituents in the Fifth Supervisorial District.



The goal of the meeting was to provide the community with the opportunity to learn about the services provided by participating agencies, and speak with Commissioners regarding local consumer protection issues.

In addition the Commission Meeting and Consumer Protection Town Hall, the Commission sponsored a resource fair to educate residents about County services available in their community.



There were about a dozen government agencies from Local, State, and Federal jurisdictions in attendance, answering consumer questions and providing general information about their services.



The participating agencies included:

211 Los Angeles County

California Department of Business Oversight

California Department of Insurance

California Contractors State License Board

Department of Consumer and Business Affairs

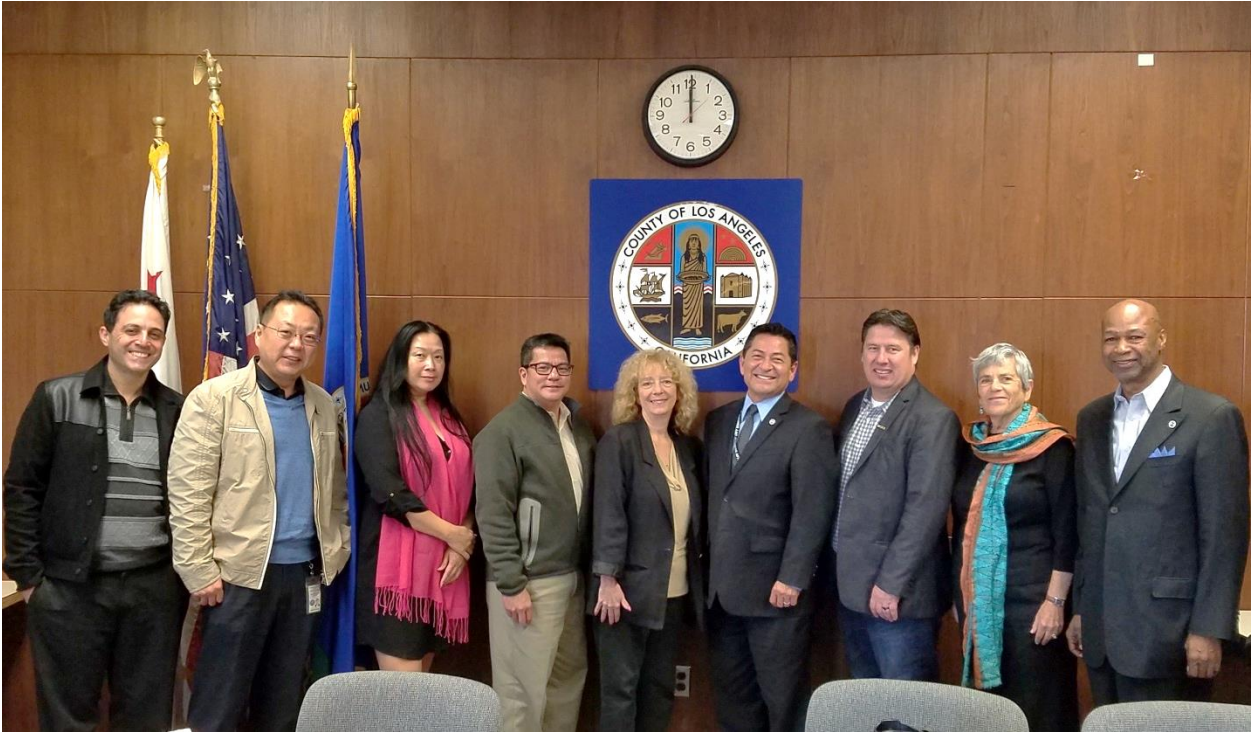
Department of Public Social Services

Department of Workforce Development, Aging & and Community Services

County of Los Angeles Office of the Assessor

Federal Trade Commission

Housing Rights Center



The Consumer Affairs Advisory Commission is proud to continue its partnership with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs. The commission will continue to serve the residents of their respective Districts by highlighting the importance of consumer education, outreach, and preventive measures to enhance consumer protection.