

RYAN SERRANO, PUBLIC COMMENT (in person)
WEST COVINA CITY COUNCIL MEETING, MARCH 16, 2021

Mr. Serrano is the Assistant Field Deputy / Caseworker to Chair Hilda L. Solis | Supervisor, First District East San Gabriel Valley Field Office

Good Evening, Madam Mayor, Councilmembers. My name is Ryan Serrano. I am here on behalf of Supervisor Hilda Solis to provide a statement.

I want to thank the approximately 80 participants including residents, business owners, city councilmembers, staff and representatives from other elected offices who attended our virtual town hall this past Thursday.

I directed the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to present this meeting in response to the large number of calls and emails my office received from concerned residents following the West Covina City Council vote on February 23rd to create its own health department. For those of you who were unable to join the recording has been posted to my Facebook page.

I also want to thank the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health—DPH—for providing a comprehensive presentation on the department’s programs and services and answering as many questions as possible from West Covina residents and community members.

As many learned during the presentation DPH offers a myriad of services that go beyond COVID-19 measures to ensure the safety and health of all 10 million residents in the County, including West Covina

One thing that was made abundantly clear is that any new department created by the city to take on this responsibility of the Department of Public Health first requires State approval which is not guaranteed.

I would also like to further emphasize that until the State recognizes any such department the County’s Department of Public Health will continue to serve the residents of West Covina.

While the presentation was very informative, it is clear that many more questions remain. It is my hope that the City listens to its residents and chooses to engage in a robust community outreach and engagement process that is transparent so that it can answer the many questions that remain from residents before continuing with this huge undertaking.

I would like to further share that West Covina City Council’s 4 to 1 vote did not hinder my efforts of bringing service to residents. In fact, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was able to meet my request to bring vaccines to the City’s veteran community in partnership with American Legion Post 790. #TeamSolis was on hand these past two Saturdays to assist as needed to distribute much needed PPE.

I would also like to underscore that there are a number of several trusted community sites in West Covina offering the vaccine and have been for several weeks, including East Valley Community Health Center; CareMore West Covina; Rite-Aid; and recent additions from CVS.

I would be remiss if I do not also mention that L.A. County has moved to the red tier. As of yesterday, restaurants can ease into opening indoors, movie theaters can turn on the lights, museums can welcome patrons again, children can return to recess with their classmates and those things we miss deeply, those connections that define us can begin to return.

I remain committed to meeting the public health needs our West Covina residents and will continue to be responsive to the needs of your community. We are here for you.

I encourage residents, business owners, city staff and council included to contact my East San Gabriel Valley Field Office at (909) 593-3661 or email FirstDistrict@BOS.LACounty.gov should you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you.

I yield the rest of my time.