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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Vernon strongly supports pending state legislation prohibiting pension lawsuits against cities by former public officials convicted of felonies for wrongdoing while in local office

Vernon, CA – The City of Vernon today expressed strong support for Senate Bill 39 authored by state Senator Kevin de León that would prohibit former public officials that have been convicted of felonies for wrongdoing, which occurred while they were in office, from filing lawsuits contesting reductions in their pensions.

Vernon City Administrator Mark Whitworth said, “SB 39 will stop a grave miscarriage of justice from occurring in Vernon and cities across California. No city should be subjected to a pension lawsuit from a former public official that has been convicted of fleecing the city they once worked for. The City of Vernon applauds Senator Kevin de León for recognizing the injustice that results when our local cities are subjected to unjustified pension lawsuits filed by former public officers who became perpetrators of wrongdoing or corruption while in office, and taking affirmative steps to stop them.”

The City of Vernon is seeking immediate dismissal of a lawsuit filed by former Vernon City Administrator Bruce Malkenhorst in L.A. County Superior Court. The California Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) reduced Malkenhorst’s annual pension to \$115,000 after improper compensation reporting was uncovered by the state pension agency. Malkenhorst’s lawsuit seeks to force the City of Vernon to use city funds to restore his \$500,000 annual pension.

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Vernon was founded in 1905 to create jobs in California. Vernon’s 1,800 businesses create more than 105,000 jobs in the Los Angeles area – including 55,000 jobs within the city’s 5.2-mile boundary. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation designated Vernon as California’s ‘Most Business Friendly City.’ Vernon generates more than \$330 million in state income and sales taxes, \$1.1 billion in taxable spending. Vernon’s businesses provide more than 4.4 billion in salaries and wages annually for workers in Los Angeles County. For more information, go to www.cityofvernon.org.