



Office of Mayor James K. Hahn

200 North Spring Street, Room 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2004

MAYOR HAHN SIGNS ORDINANCE TO CLEAR WAY FOR CITY RECOGNITION OF CONSULAR IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Los Angeles – Mayor Jim Hahn today signed an ordinance that paves the way for city recognition of identification cards issued by the consulates of any nation, provided the cards meet security and other standards established by the City Clerk.

“So much of Los Angeles is defined by immigrants from all over the world who come here to seek the opportunities that this city has to offer. This ordinance increases access to those opportunities,” Mayor Hahn said. “This ordinance opens the doors of City Hall to all Los Angeles residents, regardless of where they were born.”

“In a city of more than one hundred languages, rightfully known as the Ellis Island of the 21st century, it makes sense to recognize the I.D. cards that other governments issue their citizens,” Councilman Eric Garcetti said. “This will help immigrants in Los Angeles check out books from the library or open an account with DWP. It will enhance public safety and make Los Angeles a more welcoming place.”

Under the ordinance, a nation interested in having its citizens’ consular identification cards recognized by the city would have to petition the City Clerk, whose office would determine whether to authorize the city to accept a nation’s card as valid. The ordinance directs the City Clerk to establish standards that would ensure the card contains a photograph and date of birth, that cardholders were required to provide reliable identifying information to obtain a card, and that the cards have features reasonably designed to protect against fraud and counterfeit reproduction. The Los Angeles Police Department will be tasked with advising the City Clerk on security.

The city already recognizes cards issued by the Mexican Consulate, known as “Matricula Consulars,” a program that has seen great success in aiding the Mexican-immigrant community interact with City Hall.

"Thanks to the backup and support of Mayor Hahn and the City Council, Mexicans and now citizens from other countries have the opportunity to better interact with the city in requesting power and water services, using libraries, reporting domestic violence, identifying themselves if needed to the Los Angeles Police Department, in addition to having access to municipal buildings and to participate -- with an opinion -- in City Council sessions," said the Mexican Consul General in Los Angeles, Ruben Beltran.

Private businesses also accept the Matricula Consular, including Wells Fargo Bank.

"We applaud the city for taking the lead on this unprecedented measure and for improving the lives of millions of hardworking and deserving individuals in Los Angeles," said Shelley Freeman, Wells Fargo's L.A. metro regional president.

"Los Angeles is taking the lead on helping immigrants better-interact with government and we hope we are setting an example for other governments and private businesses to follow," Mayor Hahn said. "We want to help immigrants open bank accounts, have access to educational opportunities, and make a positive contribution to our city."

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