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Press Release: Anaheim moves towards change in its at-large electoral process

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ANAHEIM — The ACLU Foundation of Southern California (ACLU SoCal), Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho and the Law Offices of Robert Rubin announced a settlement of a lawsuit against the City of Anaheim regarding how Anaheim voters elect their city council representatives.

Currently, Anaheim has a mayor and four city council members, all elected by the voters at-large. The settlement agreement will allow Anaheim voters to change the system to six city council members elected by districts, while the mayor would continue to be elected at-large.

The Anaheim of today is a diverse and modern international destination that no longer resembles the burgeoning town of 100,000 for which the at-large system may have once been a good fit. With 336,265 residents, Anaheim is now the 10th largest city in California, but the largest in the state to still hold at-large elections. This means there are no districts from which voters are able to elect a local resident to represent their community and needs on the city council. Without district representatives to make government accountable to all of Anaheim's communities, the city council is beholden only to the most powerful in making critical decisions that affect everyone's lives in the city.

"We are pleased that by fostering dialogue and listening to the concerns of all the parties, we were able to resolve this case outside the courtroom," said Bardis Vakili, ACLU SoCal staff attorney. "Anaheim residents are the true winners here. Their willingness to step up and voice their opinions has led to this moment, with residents and city officials moving forward to address the City's election system together."

"We are one step closer to having a city council that more authentically reflects the vibrant and diverse population of Anaheim," said Jose Moreno, co-plaintiff in the case. "District elections

represent the true ethic of American democracy, with representatives who have relationships in their local community, who serve that community's needs diligently for the greater good, and who inspire others in that community to do the same."

"This settlement puts our democracy back where it belongs: with the people. Anaheim's citizens will now be given the opportunity to decide whether to convert their at-large system into a district system in which all interests are fully and fairly represented," said Robert Rubin.

"This settlement is a victory for democracy. District-elections, which will give all of Anaheim's communities a seat at the table in local government, are now within the grasp of Anaheim's residents," said Laura L. Ho of Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho.