

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL**

April 15, 2025

**Increasing Civil Penalties for Illegal Street Takeover Organizers and Spectators and Removing Posts and Demonetizing Profiles That Promote Illegal Sideshows On Major Social Media Platforms**

On September 12, 2023, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) unanimously passed the motion titled, “Addressing Illegal Street Takeovers and Racing in Unincorporated Los Angeles County.”<sup>1</sup> As a result of the motion, the County hosted two community events to gather input from residents and relevant stakeholders on actions that should be taken to reduce or eliminate illegal street takeovers. At these community events, residents highlighted the need for youth education on the dangers of street takeovers, the need for legal venues to reduce the demand for these illegal street takeovers in the public right of way, the need for adequate and proactive enforcement and penalties to disincentivize these events, and more.

In alignment with suggestions from the community, the County formed a Street Takeover Reduction Workgroup (Workgroup) comprised of representatives from the County’s Chief Executive Office, Department of Public Works, Department of Youth Development, Sheriff’s Department, County Counsel, and other relevant departments in collaboration with partner agencies and community based organizations including, the Los Angeles Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Civilian Oversight Commission, Los Angeles City Attorney, Street Racing Kills, Streets Are for Everyone, Brotherhood of Street Racers, Project Street Legal, and resident advocates. On February

<sup>1</sup> <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/183770.pdf>

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26, 2025, the Workgroup released an Action Plan<sup>2</sup> aimed at reducing illegal street takeovers across the County, especially in unincorporated areas. The Workgroup meets bi-monthly and reports to the Board quarterly.

The Workgroup recommended some ordinance changes to reflect community feedback and disincentivize attendance and participation at illegal street takeover events. Recommendations include, but are not limited to, increasing applicable fines under the County Code from \$500 to \$1,000 and expanding definitions in the Vehicle Code to include these illegal street takeover events and those who aid or abet them. Cities that border unincorporated areas like Compton and Paramount have enacted higher administrative penalties, and the County must match their efforts to ensure we curtail this behavior in our unincorporated areas.

Additionally, the Workgroup recommended that the Board and other jurisdictions send a five-signature letter to prominent social media companies, strongly requesting enforcement of their policies designed to curb promotion of malfeasance on their platforms. The Workgroup recommends this action to send a strong message that street takeovers and social media's promotion of this illegal activity is harmful to life, property, and the safety of the residents of the County. Though street takeovers have occurred in Los Angeles since the 1980's, they have increased dramatically since the COVID-19 pandemic and have become increasingly more dangerous; oftentimes resulting in deaths, robberies, high-speed chases, and more. One of the main catalysts of this increase in illegal street takeovers is the use of social media.

Despite the terms and conditions of various social media platforms' prohibiting content that promotes or facilitates illegal activities, the virtual public square allows for these events to be widely shared, and in some cases, monetized, which encourages the broader public to partake in the illegal takeover events. Social media monetization is the process of generating income from social media accounts and content. Common monetization methods include, but are not limited to, sponsored content/influencer marketing, affiliate marketing, selling products or services, creating paid

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content/memberships, and advertising revenue. Platforms like YouTube and Facebook allow users to earn money from ads displayed on their videos or content. To use Instagram's monetization features, "Subscriptions and Badges," one must be over the age of 18, comply with the platform's policies, and have at least 10,000 followers on a professional or business account. However, live streaming these illegal events often causes an influx of participants and can facilitate a localized environment becoming more prone to rapid growth in the illegality, often overwhelming law enforcement efforts to mitigate and disperse the events.

Thus, in line with the Workgroup's proposed Action Plan, the Board should take action to send a strong message to illegal street takeover participants, as well as the social media companies that incentivize them.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Direct County Counsel, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other relevant County departments and community stakeholders, to report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a draft amendment to County Code Chapter 13.46 to do the following:
  - a. Increase applicable misdemeanor fines from \$500 to \$1,000, consistent with the maximum allowable fine for misdemeanors. The penalty section should include a specific provision for opportunities for diversion;
  - b. Expand the ordinance to apply to "street takeovers" or "sideshows," including activities in the California Vehicle Code (CVC) such as "reckless driving" (CVC section 23103);
  - c. Expand the ordinance to individuals who "organize or knowingly encourage, promote, instigate, assist, facilitate, aid, or abet" such illegal takeover events. This prohibition should extend to events that are taking place presently, preparations leading up to an event, and any other step in furtherance of an illegal street takeover;
  - d. Expand the ordinance beyond public highways to include "off-street parking facilities," consistent with CVC section 23109; and
  - e. Any other relevant changes consistent with the above.

2. Direct the CEO, in consultation with County Counsel, to send a five-signature letter to leading main social media platform companies requesting that they enforce their own terms and conditions, and remove and demonetize posts that promote illegal activity, including illegal street takeover events.
3. Direct the CEO to identify and engage local jurisdictions and/or State agencies/officials to join the County in submitting similar letters to social media platforms in an effort to curb illegal street takeover events.

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