



**THE PORT  
OF LOS ANGELES**  
Executive Director's  
Report to the

Board of Harbor Commissioners

**DATE: MARCH 13, 2024**

**FROM: LABOR RELATIONS & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ - APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY SERVICES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**SUMMARY:**

Staff requests approval of an Agreement for federal government advocacy services on behalf of the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department (Harbor Department) with Holland & Knight LLP. The firm is based in Los Angeles, and the Harbor Department's points of contact are in Washington, D.C. The proposed Agreement is for a one-year term with two one-year options to extend, for a total of up to three years. The total authority of the proposed Agreement is \$324,000 over the three-year term or \$108,000 per year. The Harbor Department is financially responsible for payment of expenses incurred under the proposed Agreement.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board):

1. Find that the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines;
2. Find that in accordance with the Los Angeles City Charter (Charter), Section 1022, work under the subject Agreement is temporary in nature and can be performed more feasibly by an independent contractor rather than by City of Los Angeles (City) employees;
3. Approve the proposed Agreement with Holland & Knight LLP for a one-year term with two one-year options to extend, for a total of up to three years, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$324,000;
4. Authorize the Executive Director to execute, and the Board Secretary to attest to, the proposed Agreement; and
5. Adopt Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE: MARCH 13, 2024**

**SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND AND KNIGHT LLP FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY SERVICES**

**DISCUSSION:**

The Los Angeles City Charter (Charter), Section 231 (h), and Executive Directive No. 1A-2 (Oct. 29, 2004) specifies that the Office of the Mayor holds primary responsibility for City of Los Angeles intergovernmental relations. The Charter provision and the procedures adopted to carry out this provision are designed to ensure a unified voice and coordinated legislative strategy when representing the City's interests.

The Harbor Department's Labor Relations and Government Affairs Division (LRGA) works closely with the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., to advance the Harbor Department's federal legislative agenda, support the Harbor Department's strategic goals, and pursue a broad range of Harbor Department objectives, including protecting and securing funding, and developing policy related to the maritime supply chain and port-related infrastructure, including transportation, rail, civil works projects, security, workforce development, trade development and environmental protection, and various federal advisory committees.

The Harbor Department retains federal advocacy services to support its evolving federal policy and legislative goals, which has resulted in favorable policy changes, establishment of new programs, and federal grant dollars being awarded to the Harbor Department.

Federal advocates work under the direction of the Harbor Department's Senior Director of Labor Relations and Government Affairs.

Need for Agreements - Staff has identified the continued need to retain advocacy firms to support the Harbor Department's strategic goals of maintaining and developing stronger relationships with the Presidential Administration and Congress and pursuing legislative or administrative actions to enhance our competitive advantage. Specifically, the Harbor Department requires a consistent, day-to-day presence in Washington, D.C. through advocates who are accountable to the Harbor Department in order to accomplish the following:

- A. Advance the Port's Federal Priorities: Develop and implement strategies in support of Departmental federal priorities, such as supportive policies and funding for the Harbor Department's projects and programs, including, but not limited to, major civil works projects, dredging, transportation infrastructure, homeland security enhancements, environmental initiatives, and trade development. Basic functions include:
- Developing and proposing changes to laws, regulations, or administration policy to support Harbor Department goals.
  - Securing sponsors and co-sponsors on specific legislative and advocacy initiatives, building support among both House and Senate leadership, and cultivating additional bipartisan support from Congressional Members and Committees of jurisdiction in both chambers of the U.S. Congress.
  - Garnering support from Administration agencies, including the White House, federal agencies, commissions, boards and their staffs to advance the Harbor Department's priorities.

DATE: MARCH 13, 2024

**SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND AND KNIGHT LLP FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY SERVICES**

- Engaging in coalition building to support the Harbor Department's advocacy objectives, including working with industry, environmental groups, and other interest groups to garner support for specific legislative and policy initiatives.
- B. Conduct Follow-Up and Ongoing Development of Federal-Level Agenda: The Port of Los Angeles needs to continually develop and maintain positive, productive relationships with existing and incoming Administration officials, Federal legislators, appointed officials, and various agency staff. Federal advocates will assist the Harbor Department with access to meetings and translate these visits into tangible legislative and/or administrative activity in Washington, D.C. Continued development of these relationships is most effective when staff follow-up is done on a consistent basis.
- C. Expediting Projects and Monitoring Regulations: Federal advocates will assist in working with Federal agencies (i.e. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Maritime Commission, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, etc.) to expedite delivery of major Harbor Department projects, to develop and implement supportive policies, and to support compliance with federal regulations.
- D. Federal-Level Coordination Required for Supply Chain Optimization Efforts, and Response to Supply Congestion Issues: In response to the supply chain congestion in 2021-2022, the federal government developed a multiagency approach through Presidential Executive Orders to increase the federal government's involvement in ports and the supply chain, more broadly. This involvement includes greater federal focus on supply chain optimization through Project FLOW, the creation of the Office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy, greater interagency coordination, and other actions. These efforts have competitive implications for the Harbor Department and require a greater amount of engagement and coordination at the federal level.

Consultant Selection - On July 10, 2023, the Harbor Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Federal Legislative Advocacy Services, in keeping with the City Charter requirements and Board policies of open competition for professional services. The RFP was published on the Port of Los Angeles website and posted on the Regional Alliance Marketplace for Procurement.

Eight firms responded to the RFP however only seven were deemed responsive to the administrative requirements. The proposals were evaluated by the selection committee, consisting of two Port staff and one outside representative from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Evaluations were based on the written proposal that demonstrated firm qualifications, experience, and references; project organization, personnel, and staffing; project management; rates, fees, and budget control; and quality and responsiveness of the proposal. The selection committee virtually interviewed five of the top scoring firms. The Harbor Department selected the following firms: (1) Nossaman LLP.; (2) Holland & Knight LLP; and (3) Kadesh & Associates, LLC, as the most qualified proposers. These firms were selected based on their background, policy experience and expertise, and bipartisan relationships with relevant government officials. Each of the firms have offices in the greater Washington, D.C. area where the Harbor Department's main points of contact are located.

**DATE: MARCH 13, 2024**

**SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND AND KNIGHT LLP FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY SERVICES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:**

The proposed action is approval of an Agreement for federal government advocacy services in Washington, D.C., to benefit the Harbor Department. This is an administrative activity. Therefore, the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guideline

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Approval of the proposed Agreement will allow the Harbor Department to receive federal government advocacy services from Holland and Knight LLP. The proposed Agreement is for a one-year term with two one-year options to extend, for a total of up to three years. The authority amount for the Agreement is \$108,000 per year for a total maximum authority of \$324,000.

Funds for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 have been budgeted for the proposed Agreement in Account No. 54290 (Miscellaneous Professional Services), Center No. 260, Program No. 000. Funds for future fiscal years will be requested to be budgeted as part of the annual budget, upon Board approval. A funding out clause has been included in the proposed Agreement.

It is anticipated that funds for this Agreement will be expended as follows:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2023/2024	\$ 27,000
2024/2025	\$108,000
2025/2026	\$108,000
<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>\$ 81,000</u>
Total	\$324,000

DATE: MARCH 13, 2024

SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH HOLLAND AND KNIGHT LLP FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY SERVICES

CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the subject contract as to form and legality.

TRANSMITTALS:

1. Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and Holland and Knight, LLP
2. RFP Evaluation Score Sheet and Interview Score Sheet

FIS Approval: DAZ

CA Approval: JC



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Senior Director of  
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DAVID LIBATIQUE  
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APPROVED:



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