

OCCUPY SAN DIEGO

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Free Speech Ballot Measure Proposed By Occupy San Diego

Recent Police Crackdowns Mirror Infamous San Diego 1912 Free Speech Fight

January 2012 named "Free-Speech Month"

January 3, 2011 (SAN DIEGO) -- 100 years after the San Diego City Council infamously suppressed free speech in downtown San Diego, Occupy San Diego will commemorate this historic event by naming January 2012 as "Free-Speech Month," and by proposing a ballot measure to amend the City's municipal code to improve the respect of free speech in San Diego. This amendment will create an explicit exception to the current encroachment law (SDMC 54.0110) to allow for "peaceful picketing, lawful labor activities and peaceful political activities."

"As San Diego gears up to commemorate the now infamous Free Speech Fights of 1912, Occupy San Diego will present the San Diego City Council with the choice to protect free speech or to repeat the mistakes of a hundred years ago and continue to allow the arrest and imprisonment of peaceful citizens exercising their First Amendment rights in San Diego," said Martha Sullivan, an active San Diego community volunteer and supporter of Occupy San Diego.

On January 5, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. Occupy San Diego will host a press conference on the steps of City Hall announcing its intent to file the ballot proposal, what changes it will make to the current municipal code, and how community members can get involved and help build local support for the initiative. "We are calling all free-speech advocates to attend the San Diego City Council Rules Committee meeting on January 11, 2012, to influence the Committee's decision and recommend putting this amendment on the June 2012 ballot," said Ray Lutz, a former Congressional Candidate who was recently arrested for registering voters at the San Diego Civic Center. "The actions of the city to squelch free speech in the central square of the city are astonishing, over-reaching, and unacceptable."

Activists will submit the ballot proposal immediately after the press conference to City Offices.

"Not only are we commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the San Diego prohibition on free speech on January 20th (see http://www.aftguild.org/free_speech), said Rachel Scoma, a free speech attorney affiliated with Occupy San Diego, "we will also mark the two year anniversary of Citizens United, the U.S. Supreme Court decision which now allows corporations to spend unlimited funds to influence political campaigns as a form of political speech. We will be working to educate the people about these important issues and put pressure on the City Council to respond differently than the San Diego City Council did a 100 years ago in the disaster of the Free-Speech Fights of 1912."

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Free-speech fight of 1912 website: http://www.aftguild.org/free_speech

Ordinance prohibiting public speaking #4628, dated January 8, 1912:
http://www.aftguild.org/free_speech/history/pdf/ordinance-4623rev.pdf



Police dispersing Free Speech Meeting, San Diego, California, March 10, 1912
http://www.aftguild.org/free_speech/free-speech-gallery/gallery03.html



Police disperse Free Speech protestors in San Diego October 28, 2011 (David Hatfield)
<http://davidhatfieldphotography.com/>

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