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**GARCETTI, GREUEL, WEISS: FREE OPEN SOURCE
SOFTWARE MEANS MORE POLICE ON THE STREETS**
COUNCIL BETS THAT OPEN SOURCE MOVEMENT CAN SAVE CITY MILLIONS

Councilmembers Eric Garcetti, Wendy Greuel and Jack Weiss introduced a motion today to divert millions of dollars spent on potentially unnecessary software expenditures into a fund dedicated to the long-sought-after expansion of Los Angeles' police force.

The motion asks the Information Technology Agency to report on how the city could forgo paying for proprietary software licenses and instead transition to open source platforms and programs. "Open source" means that any programmer can see the software code and propose changes; a community of users creates, supports, and freely distributes applications. Some users pay a fee for technical support, but free support is available on internet message boards. The city spent \$5.8 million on proprietary software licenses in FY2003-4.

"For taxpayers, this is a no-brainer," said Councilmember Eric Garcetti, member of the Information Technology and General Services committee. "By engaging this online community, we can make our own communities safer. Free open source software can be as capable and more secure than products that cost the city millions."

"By rethinking the way we do business and taking advantage of new technologies, City Hall can save money – money that should be going to pay for ambulance service and police officers," said Wendy Greuel, Chair of the Audits and Governmental Efficiency committee.

"Open source software offers an interesting opportunity to save public money," said Councilmember Jack Weiss, chair of the Information Technology and General Services committee. "The City should explore open source software and all other potential savings that could provide funds for additional police officers."

The city already uses some open-source applications to run network servers. Widely used programs include OpenOffice.org, a desktop suite including a word processor and spreadsheet, and Linux, an operating system. It is not expected that all proprietary software will be replaced by open source; some is custom-made directly for the city and cannot be replaced. The motion recommends that savings from open source transitioning be placed in the Special Fund for Efficiency Projects and Police Hiring.