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Subject: [External] West Coast Thunder

Gentlemen

As all of you know, I am the president of West Coast Thunder. I know that you are all aware of what West Coast Thunder is so I will not elaborate on that issue. I would like to remind all of you that WCT is the largest motorcycle event west of the Rockies, we have always began and for many years ended our ride in the city of Riverside. Sharon Bridges and myself have spent countless hours searching for a new venue in our city that can accommodate the number of motorcycles that ride in the parade and we have not been successful to date. WCT is working closely to bring the event to March Air Museum, coordinating with Jamil Dada and the JPA but will not be able to make that move until our contract expires this May with Soboba Indian Tribe.

West Coast Thunder is not just a motorcycle ride, it is THE Memorial Day Celebration for our city. Thousands of people line the streets of the parade route to show their appreciation to Veterans and to teach their children about patriotism. Old WWII and Korean Veterans sit in wheel chairs, stand in walkers, or some stand at attention as our Honor Guard goes by. Families stand on their rooftops to wave flags and pay tribute to us. Many Veterans riding their bikes in the parade, including me, cry as we see the signs reading Welcome Home and Thank You For Your Service. Those of us that are VietNam Vets did not have that experience when we returned.

West Coast Thunder has gotten printed, radio, and TV attention almost every one of our 17 years, bringing positive attention to our city. WCT has been recognized for years in all of the major national motorcycle magazine in the country. We have received awards, plaques, proclamations and other honors from many civic organizations and local private unions and other significant groups. Raceway Ford recently held a fundraiser for the non biker community and raised over \$70,000 for WCT.

West Coast Thunder has donated approximately \$800,000 to the Riverside National Cemetery Support Committee over the last 16 years. This money goes to build and maintain memorials for POW/MIA, Medal of Honor Memorial, and more. The money is also used to maintain the dignified ambiance of this national treasure that is not covered by local, state or federal monies.

I was invited last week by Congressman Mark Takano to represent Riverside Veterans at a breakfast at the White House and a seat in the amphitheater at Arlington Cemetery Veterans Ceremony. During the breakfast I was overwhelmed with the attention I received from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert McDonald, Commander in Chief of VFW Brian Duffy, National President John Rowan of Vietnam Veterans of America, Judi Van Cleave, National President of Gold Star Wives of America, and many others due to what the West Coast Thunder Committee has done for RNC. Ronald Walters, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs of our National Cemetery Administration asked me if I was representing the RNCSC and I told him I was with West Coast Thunder and he gave me a look of awe and thanked me

. His exact words were "You guys are one of if not the largest supporters of RNC" I told him we were the largest donor and gave him the amount....\$800,000 and he could not believe it and thanked me profusely. When I was honored to shake hands with President Obama later at the breakfast, Congressman Takano introduced me as the president of West Coast Thunder and I told him how much we have donated. The President thanked me for all that WCT does for our Veterans and for supporting Riverside National Cemetery.

I would like to respectfully ask that the City of Riverside strongly consider significantly increasing the sponsorship of our annual Memorial Day event to \$10,000 and or provide traffic and police security as an in kind donation. We work very hard all year long to promote a peaceful, respectful and professional event that brings positive recognition to our great city and we appreciate any and all consideration that you can provide to better assist us in this effort.

Respectfully

Bill Chamberlain
President
West Coast Thunder