

An open letter to Mr. Jack Griffin and the Tribune Company Board of Directors:

We are writing to you on behalf of a broad cross-section of the people of Los Angeles to express our profound disappointment regarding your decision to dismiss Austin Beutner as publisher of the Los Angeles Times. As you know, a successful newspaper not only serves as the voice of a community, but as a common ground on which its citizens can come together to exchange ideas, create and strengthen relationships, and forge consensus on how to make their community a better place to live.

By removing a respected and proven local leader such as Austin from this critical position, you are making it much more difficult for the Times to fulfill these responsibilities. As you move ahead, we strongly urge you to continue with leadership that knows and loves Los Angeles and shares our commitment to its future. Anything less would be taken by the community as a message that the Tribune Company has little interest in the future of this great city.

The Times struggled through a series of financial and operational difficulties for many years, yet Austin had demonstrated in only a year that the Times was once again capable of impactful journalism and meaningful community leadership. Making such a drastic decision to terminate him after he had served less than a year in that position is both curious and disappointing to us. To the contrary, we all looked forward to seeing even more progress under Austin's leadership.

During this tumultuous time in the journalism profession, we understand that your goals are both to serve a community and to oversee a profitable business enterprise. However, we share Austin's view that the paper's commitment to Los Angeles is a key to its financial success as well. At a time when readers can receive their news from an infinite number of sources, the connection that develops from a media platform's commitment to a community is of tremendous import.

For 133 years, the Times has faithfully served the people of Los Angeles. Under the guidance of dedicated public servants and civic-minded leaders, the Times has helped us come to understand each other, face our challenges and move forward together. We strongly urge you to demonstrate to the news consumers of Southern California that the Times will continue to serve their interests. The alternative would be to do great damage to both our community and your bottom line.

With our love of the city and of the Times, we strongly urge you provide the Times with the leadership and support that its readers deserve.

Sincerely,

Titles are used for identification purposes.

Antonio Villaraigosa
Former Mayor of Los Angeles

Mickey Kantor
Chairman, Los Angeles 2020 Commission

David Fleming
Founder, Los Angeles County Business Federation
(BizFed)

Antonia Hernandez
President & CEO,
California Community Foundation

Helen Iris Torres
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Richard Riordan
Former Mayor of Los Angeles

John W. Mack
Former President, Los Angeles Urban League and
Los Angeles Police Commission

Kathay Feng
Executive Director, California Common Cause

Anthony Pritzker
Managing Partner, Pritzker Group

Charlie Woo
CEO, Megatoys and Past Chairman of the Los Angeles
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Dan Schnur
Director, Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics

David Abel
Founder, VerdeXchange

Lou Baglietto
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Frank Baxter
Businessman and former United States Ambassador

Eli Broad
Founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation

Steve Bullock
CFO, Cerrell Associates

Steve Catalano
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Lisa Collins
Publisher, L.A. Focus Magazine

Bruce Corwin
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Renee Croce
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Hal Dash
Chairman & CEO, Cerrell Associates

Shari L. Davis
Chair, Community for Excellent Public Schools

Carl Douglas
Civil Rights Attorney

Stephanie Graves
President & CEO, Lee Andrews Group

Dr. Jerrold Green
President & CEO, Pacific Council on International Policy

Wendy Greuel
Former Los Angeles City Controller and City Councilwoman

Glenn Gritzner
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Mark Wilber
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