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Recall effort targets supervisor

RIVERSIDE COUNTY: Marion Ashley says talk of him catering to special interests is untrue and calls the ouster attempt "frivolous."

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By DUANE W. GANG
The Press-Enterprise

A group of Riverside County residents has started a recall effort targeting Supervisor Marion Ashley, calling him a "special interests" politician who caters to developers.

The group known as the Committee Supporting the Recall of Supervisor Ashley filed a notice of intent this month, one of the first steps in the recall process.

"Public documents and your voting record reflect a willingness to place residents' property values and their health, safety, and welfare at risk, while at the same time favoring developers and special interests," the notice reads.

On Friday, Ashley described the recall as a "frivolous effort" by a narrow group of individuals.

Ashley, first elected in 2002, already faces re-election in June.

"If they disagree with me, why don't they find a candidate who feels like they do and get behind him," Ashley said.

He said rallying behind such a candidate would probably be faster and more efficient than gathering the more than 14,000 signatures required to place a recall on the ballot.

Ashley, who filed his response to the notice of intent on Tuesday, said he doesn't believe the recall will be successful.

Those backing the recall effort cite the Procinctu project in Homeland as an example of why they feel Ashley should be removed. The project is a private military-style training center that supervisors have approved.

Recall supporters say Ashley inappropriately fast-tracked the project, resulting in a "gross failure of the public trust," according to the notice of intent.

Ashley said the project has gone through all the proper approvals, and those opposed to the project have had opportunities to voice their concerns.

Ann Weston, a Procinctu critic, describes herself as the recall coordinator. She includes her contact information on the recall news release and owns a Web site, bootthemout.net, supporting the effort.

On Friday, Weston, who does not live in Ashley's district, said she is not part of the committee. But in her view, she said, voters need to be aware of the issues surrounding Ashley.

Ashley represents the county's 5th District, which includes Moreno Valley, Banning, Beaumont and Perris.

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