**SIR Rebranding Comments**

**Branch 36:**

August 14, 2024

Dear State SIR Board & Executives

On behalf of the Branch Executive Committee of SIR Branch 36, we submit the following in response to the recent State SIR initiatives to modify the SIR Organization.

In repeating some of the comments submitted by branches 84 and 110, we strongly urge that these suggested changes be put to a vote by all branches, and proceed only if a majority of the branches, and respective members, concur with the initiatives.

The features of the State SIR initiatives include such items as:

1.         Changing the Mission Statement

2.         Changing the Logo

3.         Changing the name of the Organization

4.         Relabeling Branches as “Chapters”

5.         Eliminating the word “Retirement”

6.         Changing the names of the Big and Little Sir to President and Vice-President

7.         Changing the By-Laws to include gender neutrality.

8.         Reorganizing as a non-profit under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(3).

We respectfully disagree with every one of the proposed initiatives submitted by the State SIR group. They do nothing to maintain the notion of a unique organization of older men that come together to enjoy fun and fellowship without burdensome rules or obligations. Including women was fully contemplated and was voted down.

Additionally, there is a proposal to hire an Executive Director, a Marketing firm, and an Information Technology firm. These proposals are expensive and offer little benefit to the Branches nor members of SIR. The additional costs for name and logo changes, the greater bureaucracy created, and tax law changes to the fundamental structure of SIR, are completely unnecessary and a gross waste of money.

We believe additional focus should be placed on organization and chapter publicity in local newspapers, radio stations and active participation at local community events.

We feel the direction State SIR is proposing is ill-advised.

Respectfully,

Andre Adema

Big SIR, Chapter 36

**Branch 34:**

Dear Fellow SIRs:

Branch 34 (Trivalley) would like to go on record as supporting many of the concerns expressed in the letter from Banches 84 and 110. We have recently polled our members and they voted by a 3-1 margin to reject all of the initiatives put forth in the Town Hall meeting, i.e., changing the name, changing the logo, changing the officer titles, becoming a 501(c)3 organization and somewhat less opposed to changing from Branch to Chapter.

On the other hand, our BEC has voted that we see little damage from changing the logo or the titles of the officers or changing from Branch to Chapter, but we strongly oppose conversion to a not-for-profit fund raising organiztion, hiring consultants and marketing experts, or changing the name SIR.  We can agree to drop the word “retirement “ from the name.

Our reasons are the same as those expressed in earlier responses from other Branches. The generation of people we are trying to recruit as new members has demonstrated that they are not interested in joining organizations.  They are content to have social interactions digitally.  We have no astounding insights into how that can be changed and we do not think recruiting women is the answer either.

The current members feel that they joined for male fellowship and if the need for that has passed and the organization dies a natural death, so be it.  Our branch has had a stable membership for several years despite deaths and relocation.  We recruit by word of mouth and personal contact and we are happy with the new members that we get.

Sincerely,

BEC, BRANCH 34

John Roberts, Gary Kohler, Pat Fowler, Robert Jacobsen, Tom Crawford, Peter Weeks, David Rowe, Bill Junge, David Wilmore, Ken McDonald

**Branch 84 and Branch 110:**

The Branch Executive Committees of SIR Branches 84 and 110 (Chico) would like to share our reaction to the recent initiatives to modify the SIR Organization into what is believed would be more sustainable, and better suited and responsive to modern American Society.

We were not made aware of these “heavy handed” initiatives until they had already reached the initial stages of implementation. We had no say in this huge change to our organization. We strongly suggest that these changes be put to a vote by all members, and proceed only if a majority assent can be achieved.

The features of the initiatives include such items as:

1. Changing the Mission Statement and Logo

2. Changing the name of the Organization

3. Relabeling Branches as “Chapters”

4. Eliminating the word “Retirement”

5. Changing the names of the Big and Little Sir to President and Vice-

President

6. Changing the By-Laws to include gender neutrality.

7. Reorganizing as a non-profit under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(3).

In our opinion, these are nothing more than “window dressing” that do nothing to maintain the notion of a unique organization of older men that come to together to enjoy fun and fellowship without burdensome rules or obligations.

Additionally, there is a proposal to hire an Executive Director, a Marketing firm, and an Information Technology firm. These proposals are expensive and offer little bene<t to the members other than additional bureaucracy, dues, and costs.

In our opinion, taken together, these initiatives will destroy the core of what SIR is; all in the name of sustainability in a changing environment, and for the sake of enhancing membership through inclusion of all ages and genders. Essentially and crudely, “If it breathes, make it a member.” We understand the organization’s membership is diminishing, and we are not well known to the public. We do support efforts to enhance public awareness, visibility of the organization, and “grassroots” efforts to increase membership locally.

We appreciate the autonomy to operate, as we see fit, within the broad restrictions imposed by our insurance.

Many of us look to SIR as a major source of fellowship for like-aged and like-minded individuals. We cherish it as one of the major sources of social interaction for older men, and we do not see ourselves as a service or fundraising organization--just one of fun and fellowship.

It is universally known that our overall society is increasingly disengaged from social interaction. The paradigm has changed, and we are no different. However, we do not think that “jerking the organization around” extensively will bring any benefit.

In Summary, PLEASE! seek the assent of the entire membership before proceeding in a way that many of us believe will do little toward keeping SIR, SIR.

Sincerely,

Branch 84 Board and Executive Committee