An ordinance defining the term “honored guest” as the term is used in City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen Rules, as an individual, or their representative, who is being honored by the Board of Aldermen through a Resolution on that day’s meeting agenda, and such honoree’s immediate family members and friends, and immediate family members of the members of Board of Aldermen.

WHEREAS, City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen Rule 31, limits the admission of individuals to the Chamber during Board of Aldermen meetings to members of the Board and its employees, the Mayor or his/her designee, the Comptroller or his/her designee, members of the press, and “honored guests”; specifically, Rule 31 provides:

During a meeting of the Board of Aldermen only the Mayor or his/her designee; the Comptroller or his/her designee; members of the Board of Aldermen; employees of the Board of Aldermen and the President shall be admitted to the floor of the Chamber. Honored guests, and representatives of the Press with proper professional identification shall be admitted to the floor of the Chamber, to be situated at places designated by the President. It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms and other staff members to see that all other persons are excluded, and directed to the Gallery.

WHEREAS, Board members’ introductions of their “honored guests” is a weekly ritual, however Rule 31 provides no definition for the term “honored guest”; and
WHEREAS, individuals who are present in the Chamber during meetings as the “honored guests” or members of the Board are afforded opportunities to, and frequently do, communicate directly with members of the Board during meetings and attempt to influence their legislative actions; and

WHEREAS, the access to elected decision-makers that is afforded an individual present in the Chamber as the “honored guest” of a member of the Board is greater than that afforded members general public who are relegated to the seats in the Chamber gallery during meetings; and

WHEREAS, many such “honored guests” are, by definition, “lobbyists”, which in general terms, is defined under Missouri law (Section 105.470 RsMO) as an individual attempting to influence the state executive, state legislative, state judicial, or elected local government officials’ actions and meets one or more of the following:

1. Is acting in the ordinary course of business

2. Is engaged in pay as a lobbyist

3. Is designated to act as a lobbyist by any person, business entity, governmental entity, religious organization, nonprofit corporation, association or other entity

4. Spends $50 or more on behalf of public officials, annually, from January 1 through December 31st

WHEREAS, when paid lobbyists representing private interests, are introduced by members of the Board as "honored guests" it may appear indiscreet, if not improper, thus weakening the public’s trust in their elected officials.
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE. The term “honored guest,” as used in City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen Rules shall mean an individual, or their representative, who is being honored by the Board of Aldermen through a Resolution on that day’s meeting agenda, and such honoree’s immediate family and friends, and immediate family members of the members of Board of Aldermen.