

## Communication from Public

**Name:**

**Date Submitted:** 04/29/2025 04:21 PM

**Council File No:** 00-9999

**Comments for Public Posting:** My name is Brittanie Gaja and I am a resident of Los Angeles. I strongly oppose the proposed budget cuts that would lead to the closure of three of our six city animal shelters: the Harbor, West Los Angeles, and West Valley facilities. These shelters are not optional services. They are essential components of our public safety network, our emergency response infrastructure, and our city's commitment to humane and equitable treatment of animals. Shutting them down would have serious and lasting consequences for both people and animals across Los Angeles. If these closures move forward, the remaining shelters will be forced to absorb the full citywide intake of animals. This will lead to extreme overcrowding, higher euthanasia rates, and an increase in stray and potentially dangerous animals in our neighborhoods. These are not hypothetical outcomes. Cities that have made similar cuts have seen devastating results. In Dallas, Texas, shelter service reductions led to a significant increase in loose dog populations. Several residents were seriously injured, and one woman, Antoinette Brown, was tragically killed in a stray dog attack in 2016. In San Antonio, cuts to shelter capacity caused animal welfare conditions to deteriorate and euthanasia rates to rise. Kern County, right here in California, experienced increased illegal animal dumping and public complaints after closing some of its shelters. We cannot afford to repeat these mistakes in Los Angeles. Our animal services system is already under strain, with staffing and volunteer shortages that limit outreach, response time, and care. Closing half of our shelters will overwhelm the remaining ones and put additional pressure on rescue groups and residents. It will also increase the risk of disease outbreaks, neglect cases, and public safety incidents involving stray or aggressive animals. The West Valley shelter is especially critical. It is the only city-run facility capable of housing large animals and livestock during emergencies such as wildfires. As the impacts of climate change continue to escalate, this capacity is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Without it, both animals and their owners could face life-threatening situations with nowhere to turn during evacuations. Los Angeles has long been a national leader in progressive, compassionate public policy. These proposed closures would undermine that legacy and shift the burden of care and safety to communities that are already overextended.

Residents, first responders, and nonprofit rescue organizations cannot fill the gap these closures would create. I respectfully urge the City Council to reject this budget proposal. There are more balanced and responsible ways to address financial challenges that do not endanger public safety or abandon our responsibility to the animals in our care. Please preserve all six animal shelters and invest in a system that reflects the values and priorities of the people of Los Angeles. Thank you.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Andrea Tseng

**Date Submitted:** 04/29/2025 04:26 PM

**Council File No:** 00-9999

**Comments for Public Posting:** Good afternoon, My name is Andrea Tseng, Director of Older Adult Services at Chinatown Service Center. Let me be clear: supporting our seniors is not charity — it is justice. In the City of Los Angeles, approximately 764,000 residents are aged 60 and over, comprising about 19% of the population. By 2030, that number is projected to exceed 1 million — nearly one in four Angelenos. Across Los Angeles County, there are over 2 million older adults aged 60+, with 37% of those aged 65 and older unable to meet their basic needs. These are not just statistics. They are our parents, our grandparents, our neighbors — individuals who built our communities, raised our families, and sustained our economy. And now, too many are isolated, frail, and vulnerable to neglect, financial exploitation, and abuse. Without access to essential services, they risk slipping through the cracks — and far too many already have. In fact, 17,937 adults aged 55+ engaged with the homeless response system in Los Angeles County. We must respond with urgency. The time to increase the budget for aging services is now. Funding must match the scale of the need — not just for today, but for the rapidly growing population of tomorrow. The Older Americans Act (OAA), the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), and the Department of Aging exist to safeguard our elders by providing critical support — case management, transportation, nutrition, counseling, caregiver support, and more. But these programs are under-resourced, and the consequences are devastating. We must recognize that many of our most vulnerable elders cannot advocate for themselves. They are overwhelmed by the daily struggle of simply trying to survive — accessing food, getting to medical appointments, finding safe housing. They are the most silent, yet they are the ones who most need our voice and action. We must protect, strengthen, and modernize our care infrastructure. This means not only defending the OAA and local aging programs but reimagining a system that meets real needs with dignity, compassion, and accountability. A system we can be proud of — as Angelenos, as a society. Caregivers, too, are in crisis. In Los Angeles County, an estimated 1.6 million adults provide care to a loved one — one in five. These caregivers are the backbone of our communities, yet many do so without pay, support, or respite. They deserve better. I speak not only as a professional, but as someone who grew up in a traditional

Taiwanese family where elders are respected and cared for. I have witnessed the wisdom, resilience, and cultural strength our elders bring to every generation. When we support them, we strengthen the entire fabric of society. Yet, our dominant culture still idolizes youth, speed, and efficiency — while aging is miscast as decline. But aging is not decay; it is accumulation — of knowledge, experience, and power. Investing in our seniors is not optional. It is fiscally responsible, morally necessary, and socially just. It costs far less to support aging in place than to intervene during crisis — but more importantly, it reflects our values. Let us be clear and united: We demand increased investment in aging care. We call on our leaders to protect the OAA, preserve the Department of Aging, and reform the care system to truly serve its purpose. Let's build a model of aging care in Los Angeles that we can be proud of — one that leads the nation in dignity, equity, and justice for all. Thank you.