

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Marie Camino  
**Date Submitted:** 01/24/2022 01:12 PM  
**Council File No:** 11-1678-S3  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please find Mercy For Animals' public comment attached. Thank you, Marie Camino



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[MercyForAnimals.org](http://MercyForAnimals.org)

**Hearing date:** Tuesday, January 25th, 2022

**Time & Location:** 2:00 pm, 200 N. Spring Street, Room 1050

**To:** Chair John S. Lee  
Councilmember Mike Bonin  
Councilmember Joe Buscaino

**Submitted by:** Marie Camino, Policy Advisor

**Re:** Testimony on Council File 11-1678-S3

Dear Chair Lee, Councilmember Bonin, and Councilmember Biscaino,

Mercy For Animals, a nonprofit organization dedicated to constructing a more just and sustainable food system, thanks the Council for the opportunity to provide general public comment on Council File 11-1678-S3. Mercy For Animals is headquartered in Los Angeles and has approximately 2,300 supporters in the city.

Mercy For Animals strongly supports Council File 11-1678-S3 and associated efforts to provide vegan options at city concessionaire locations, food programs for seniors including Meals on Wheels, and Los Angeles World Airports. Mercy For Animals also strongly supports an additional ordinance requiring movie theatres and large-scale entertainment venues in the city to provide at least one vegan protein entrée option.

Providing at least one vegan option at these venues has the potential to save taxpayer dollars, increase public health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase consumer choice.

#### *Taxpayer Savings*

Adding at least one plant-based option to taxpayer-funded food programs for seniors and city concessionaire locations could reduce the amount the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Zoo and the Department on Aging spends on food each year. A study from the Oakland Unified School District is an illustrative example of cost savings: a shift to plant-forward meals saved \$42,000 taxpayer dollars over the course of two years.<sup>1</sup> A pilot analysis by Health Care Without

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<sup>1</sup> Friends of The Earth (2017). Meat of The Matter: A Municipal Guide to Climate Friendly Food Purchasing. Retrieved from: [https://1bps6437gg8c169i0y1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MunicipalReport\\_ko\\_120117\\_v2-1.pdf](https://1bps6437gg8c169i0y1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MunicipalReport_ko_120117_v2-1.pdf)



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Harm also found that four San Francisco Bay Area hospitals generated an estimated food service savings of \$400,000 per year by shifting food purchases to more climate friendly options.<sup>2</sup>

### *Public Health*

More sustainable diets have been linked to increased public health. A 2018 study compared omnivorous diets to Mediterranean, pescatarian, and vegetarian diets, and found a reduction in disease risk.<sup>3</sup> In 2017, Cardiovascular disease was the leading cause of death in California.<sup>4</sup> Plant-based diets have been directly linked to a reduction in heart disease.<sup>5</sup>

### *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction*

In addition to saving taxpayer dollars, the Oakland Unified School District's study (mentioned above) also noted a decrease in its carbon footprint by 14 percent and its water footprint by 6 percent.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, in 2021, the city of Berkeley, California passed a resolution vowing to achieve a 50% reduction in animal-based food served by the city by 2040.<sup>7</sup> The primary motivator for the Berkeley resolution is to reach greenhouse gas reduction targets as outlined by the city.<sup>8</sup>

### *Consumer Choice*

Finally, as noted in the original motion, there has been a major uptick in citizens identifying as vegan or incorporating more plant-based meals into their lifestyle. One study shows that the number of Americans who identify as vegans has risen from just 290,000 in 2004 to 9.7 million

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<sup>2</sup> LaGasse, Lisa and Roni Neff (2010). *Balanced Menus: A pilot evaluation in Four San Francisco Bay Area Hospitals*. Prepared for San Francisco Physicians for Social Responsibility and Health Care Without Harm. [http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-andinstitutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/research/clf\\_publications/pub\\_rep\\_desc/balanced\\_menu.html](http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-andinstitutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/research/clf_publications/pub_rep_desc/balanced_menu.html)

<sup>3</sup> Burlingame, Barbara and Dernini, Sandro. *Sustainable Diets: Linking Nutrition and Food Systems*. Boston, MA: CABI, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Stats of the State of California." Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/california/california.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Harvard Health Publishing. "The Right Plant-Based Diet for you." Retrieved from <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/the-right-plant-based-diet-for-you>

<sup>6</sup> Friends of The Earth (2017). *Meat of The Matter: A Municipal Guide to Climate Friendly Food Purchasing*. Retrieved from: [https://1bps6437gg8c169i0y1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MunicipalReport\\_ko\\_120117\\_v2-1.pdf](https://1bps6437gg8c169i0y1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MunicipalReport_ko_120117_v2-1.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Councilmember Sophie Hahn & Mayor Jesse Arreguin, Resolution: To Accelerate the City of Berkeley's transition to Plant-Based Foods, p. 6 (2021), [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewjahsJZ\\_Mr1\[...\]on\\_to\\_Plant-Based\\_Foods.aspx&usg=AOvVaw02y2rY8gCsG0z4fgW5tXj](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewjahsJZ_Mr1[...]on_to_Plant-Based_Foods.aspx&usg=AOvVaw02y2rY8gCsG0z4fgW5tXj) (last visited Jan. 24, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



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in 2019.<sup>9</sup> Citizens of Los Angeles should be able to honor their dietary choices at city concessionaires and other venues serving food.

Council File 11-1678-S3 and the mandated reports are of utmost importance to Mercy For Animals, and create an opportunity for Los Angeles to save taxpayer dollars, improve public health for LA residents, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and expand consumer choice. Mercy For Animals thanks the Council for considering our above comments.

Sincerely,  
Mercy For Animals

Marie Camino  
Policy Advisor  
[MarieC@mercyforanimals.org](mailto:MarieC@mercyforanimals.org)  
239.218.8754

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<sup>9</sup> IPSOS Retail Performance (2019). Vegan Trends in The U.S.: Vegan Populations in The U.S. Retrieved from <https://www.ipsos-retailperformance.com/en/vegan-trends/>

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Laura Cascada

**Date Submitted:** 01/24/2022 04:21 PM

**Council File No:** 11-1678-S3

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am writing on behalf of the Better Food Foundation and our supporters in Los Angeles in support of item 11-1678-S3. Other municipalities who have offered more plant-forward meals have saved a significant amount on food purchasing. The Oakland Unified School District is an illustrative example of cost savings: a shift to plant-forward meals saved \$42,000 taxpayer dollars over the course of two years. Further, in 2017, cardiovascular disease was the number one cause of death in California, and plant-forward diets have been shown to reduce heart disease. Many cities are also taking steps to procure fewer meat, dairy, and egg products to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Berkeley is a great example, as they passed a resolution to achieve a 50% reduction in animal-based foods served by the city by 2040 in order to meet their aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets. I hope you will stand in support of this item. Thank you!

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Nilang Gor

**Date Submitted:** 01/24/2022 09:23 PM

**Council File No:** 11-1678-S3

**Comments for Public Posting:** My name is Nilang Gor. I am a Senior Scientist in the field of genetic diseases. I am also a founder of non-profit called Cultivate Empathy for All. We educate and empower local residents to advocate for sustainable food policies. Our recent work allowed Berkeley Council to pass Vision 2025 for Sustainable Food Policies (<https://sentientmedia.org/how-one-small-city-in-california-is-going-plant-based/>) and CalPERS Factory Farming Divestment (<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2021/04/30/opinion-berkeley-urges-calpers-to-divest-from-industrial-animal-protein-factory-farming-companies>). I am writing this comment in support of vegan protein options item scheduled at Arts, Parks, Health, Education and Neighborhoods Committee on 25th January, 2022 (<https://lacity.primegov.com/Portal/MeetingPreview?compiledMeetingDocumentFileId=21395>). We have 6-11 years before exceeding 1.5C warming and IPCC reports that we need to cut 45% GHG emissions by 2030 to limit global warming. IPCC also reports that food emissions account for 21-37% of total anthropogenic GHG emissions. Therefore, it crucial to significantly reduce our food emissions by 2030. The U.S. cities often follow only sector-based GHG inventory that ignores emissions associated with imported goods. Several U.S. cities are, therefore, adopting plant-based policies to reduce their consumption-based GHG emissions. According to University of Michigan's report, plant-based foods can reduce the U.S. food emissions up to 51% by 2030 (<https://css.umich.edu/publication/implications-future-us-diet-scenarios-greenhouse-gas-emissions>). Such plant-based shift can also help sequester carbon through land restoration (<https://www.carbonbrief.org/rich-nations-could-see-double-climate-dividend-by-switching-to-plant-based-foods>). Plant-based foods also help improve public health and cultural inclusivity. Therefore, I kindly request you to pass vegan protein options (11-1678-S3). Thanks a lot, Nilang