

Communication from Public

Name: Amber

Date Submitted: 02/27/2025 11:36 PM

Council File No: 13-1493-S17

Comments for Public Posting: Councilmembers, There's currently a growing informal economy operating on our streets, with vendors setting up shop without always adhering to regulations. They operate in residential areas now and causing a significant issue in the community including throwing their grease on dirt killing trees and blocking a whole section of sidewalks. Operations of unpermitted and unregulated outdoor restaurants are overrunning Los Angeles. Frankly, I'm tired of seeing issues framed through a lens that only serves to deepen divisions. We need solutions that address the core problems impacting our community's well-being. We need to focus on balance – a balance that ensures safety, opportunity, and a sense of belonging for every resident, regardless of their background. There's no balance. We have vendors who are playing by the rules, going through the proper channels, and then we have a growing number who are blatantly ignoring the system, knowing full well there are virtually no consequences. It's become lawless. We have rights to enforce the regulations that do exist, like those outlined in Senate Bill 946. It's about creating a fair system. A system where everyone plays by the same rules, where health and safety are priorities, and where residents aren't left feeling helpless in their own neighborhoods. We entrusted you with the responsibility to represent our interests, to work tirelessly for the betterment of this city. We're asking for you to do the job you were elected to do. We're asking for you to listen, to understand, and to act with a focus on genuine community well-being. I recommend amending city ordinances and allocating funds to programs that can effectively enforce consequences on those who choose to continue to improperly vend. I recommend a reasonable and practical location that allows vendors to openly vend and have them abide by rules to make sure their no longer in sensitive areas like in residential neighborhoods. You hold the power to establish balance in our communities, the SB 296 currently allows you to provide an effective balance, however you choose not to enforce the SB 296. Right now due to no enforcement and no oversight a huge stimulation of unpermitted street vending is overtaking Los Angeles. Ross and Target on Laurel Canyon, the Khols on Laurel Canyon, our community park on Branford, in front of our home, down on Canterbury and Rayen. Their blocking huge sections of the sidewalks setting up seats and

tables operating as unauthorized outdoor restaurants. There is no one and nowhere a resident can call regarding safety and accessibility concerns. The county health department is so backed up they won't show up for months and they too express their frustration that having to come out multiple times for repeat vendors is becoming not only frustrating but a waste of time and money. The attitude with the current vendors is also changing, many now believe their entitled to any spot no matter who it affects. I have personally witnessed the food vendors at Branford Park tell a child to move so they can put out more chairs and was told by the park supervisor that he has received many complaints about this. There's also an unspoken black market going on where gangs are charging "rent" This allows a big opportunity for increased gang influence. so if these vendors are allowed to vend in sensitive areas and something goes wrong where does that leave the residents? Since there's no one allowing us to call anyone to step in to protect us we're left vulnerable till something bad happens It's about creating a fair system for everyone. We the people who are being impacted by the current system are pleading for your intervention and your reconsideration and find a reasonable, practical, and solid resolution. We ask you to exercise the rights that we have that are outlined in the SB 296 and that of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) 56.12. We no longer will accept our city officials to tell us "there is nothing you can do" or "your hands are tied" we do have the ability to do something. We need your support to secure the necessary resources for creating a beautiful, safe, and vibrant city.

Dear city councilmembers,

I am writing to you today with a desperate plea for help. Our peaceful neighborhood is under siege by a relentless tide of unregulated street vendors, and the city's inaction is destroying our quality of life. This issue is causing significant disruption to our communities and leaving residents and legitimate businesses feeling abandoned. The topic of vendors remains a sensitive topic due to a trend of harassments around 2016 leaving many Angelinos to become biased. There has to be an understanding and balance amongst vendors and the community. The inability to effectively regulate street vendors, even in the face of clear violations, undermines the very foundation of community order and resident safety.

The 2018 Safe Sidewalk Vending Act, while intended to support micro-businesses, it has instead unleashed chaos upon our streets. Unpermitted vendors, operating without health inspections, proper permits, or any regard for our community, have taken over sidewalks, parking lots, and even our parks. The Safe Sidewalk Vending Act has severely neglected the rights and concerns of residents and businesses and this growing frustration is reaching a boiling point.

The consequences of this unchecked growth are severe: Traffic and parking issues, Noise Pollution, Erosion of Property Values, Public Health Concerns, Obscuration of Public Signage, Stimulation of Unauthorized Street Vending, Unlicensed Outdoor Dining, Obstruction of Public Spaces, Violation of privacy, Elevated Fire Risk, Inadequate Waste Management, Prolonged and Unregulated Hours of Operation

Our neighborhood has been turned into a chaotic and unsafe zone by a vendor who has set up a pop-up food operation, an outdoor restaurant right outside our windows on Bracken and Canterbury everyday Monday-Friday from 4 PM to 10 PM, and on Sundays from 9AM to 10 PM. This isn't just a minor inconvenience; it's an assault on our quality of life. They set out tables and chairs to encourage their customers to stay for prolong periods of time. Trash, discarded food, oils and grease are left behind daily, forcing us to constantly contact the city for cleanups. Open flame in a location with dry trees and leaves increasing a fire hazard to homes close by, no bathrooms nearby for proper sanitization. Illegal and inconsiderate parking and driving by both the vendor and their customers have made our narrow street a dangerous obstacle course. We are frequently blocked in, unable to come and go freely from our own homes. This erosion of our safety and security has left us feeling like prisoners in our own neighborhood, as well as encouraging other vendors to operate in the same location simultaneously. This is not an isolated incident, locations such as 9725 Laurel Cyn Blvd., 15316 Nordhoff St., 6613 Lauren Cyn Blvd, 12084 Kittridge St. and so many more are overtaken by stationed vendors illegally vending as outdoor restaurants blocking a whole section of the sidewalks. Many other locations throughout our city are plagued by similar unlicensed vending operations, all blatantly violating city and state ordinances. Many of our sidewalks are obstructed and trashed, making our streets unsafe to walk through.

The food vendors we are battling with began at Branford Park, they were there operating there every day for several months until they were cited and their food was confiscated, the very next day they began their operation not even a whole block over and set up right in front of our home on the corner of Canterbury and Branford, they were then cited and food was again removed from the cite. The very next day they were back in operation and returned to the Branford Park. This blatant disregard for public health and safety regulations highlights a critical failure in enforcement and disturbing lack of consequences for those who jeopardize our community's well-being.

The unchecked proliferation of vendors operating out of Branford Park has irrevocably transformed our once-peaceful community into a hazardous and increasingly hostile environment. My dog, has suffered multiple injuries from discarded bottle caps left behind by their inconsiderate patrons, who are openly encouraged to consume alcohol within the park. This not only poses a serious sanitation threat but also creates a dangerous environment for our children and pets, who are now forced to navigate a minefield of potential hazards. The blatant disregard for the safety and well-being of our community displayed by these vendors is simply unacceptable. To further exacerbate the situation, we have witnessed these vendors instructing children to refrain from playing in "their area," a blatant attempt to expand their operations and prioritize profit over the enjoyment of our shared public space. I have been in direct contact with the Branford park supervisor, who shares my growing frustration over the unchecked presence of unpermitted food vendors operating in this manner. Encouraging nuisance behavior in the park making it feel less safe for families and fundamentally altering the character of our public spaces.

We have exhausted every avenue for help: our city councilman's office, the City Wide Services Directory, our SLO, our state assembly member, the police non-emergency number, the Los Angeles County of Department of Health, our neighborhood council, and the local police department whom told me their program to enforce rules on street vendors was defunded awhile back and have very little authority to help. Our city officials only offered to send out 'help' of ICON, an non-profit organization whose goal it is to help unpermitted vendors establish a proper permit and provide resources to them to turn their street vending business into a legitimate business they can refuse the help and continue on vending without repercussions.

While the Los Angeles County Department of Health possesses the authority to oversee these operations, their ability to enforce regulations appears severely hampered. The current system, where the removal of food items serves as the sole recourse for egregious violations, proves utterly ineffective. Vendors simply return the following day, operating with impunity. Furthermore, a court appearance is issued but if they do not have identification on them there is nothing the Health department can do. The inability to ensure compliance with sanitation and safety standards leaves our community vulnerable. Their protocols use to allow them to remove the entire operation and that has now been discontinued, even though it had served as an effective solution.

We are absolutely heartbroken and furious. The city of Arleta and all surrounding cities suffer from an influx of homeless encampments, unregulated street vendors, and crime is rampant. It feels like the city has completely abandoned us. Our streets are filthy, our neighborhoods are unsafe, and our quality of life is being destroyed. The city seems overwhelmed, under-resourced, and frankly indifferent to our plight. We were told they are powerless, that their hands are tied. But we cannot accept this. We deserve to feel safe, to enjoy our neighborhood, and to have our voices heard.

The city's failure to act is a moral and ethical failure. It's a betrayal of the very people who make Los Angeles a vibrant and dynamic city. This situation highlights a failure of city government to protect its citizens and enforce its own laws. This issue directly impacts the health, safety, and well-being of countless Los Angeles residents.

This isn't just about inconvenience; it's about the erosion of our quality of life, our sense of community, and our fundamental right to feel safe in our own homes. Residents and businesses are left feeling frustrated and ignored by the city's lack of action. These collective issues demand immediate attention to mitigate their detrimental impact on the character and quality of life within this residential community.

I recommend the following measures:

- * Increased Enforcement: Intensify code enforcement efforts to locate, identify and relocate unlicensed vendors.

- *amend the current city ordinance and allocate funds for programs that can enforce consequences on those who choose to improperly vend.

- *Implement city rules to prohibit street vending in sensitive areas.

- *Legislative Lobby: Lobby for new amendments to the 2018 Safe Sidewalk Vending Act to strengthen protections for residents and businesses from these scenarios. Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter. I will be attaching a file that contains many images of documented problems food vendors continue to bring throughout Los Angeles as well as in our residential neighborhood.

- *Locate a reasonable and practical location that allows all vendors to operate while abiding by rules and prevent them from operating in sensitive areas like in residential neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Amber Mendoza