

Communication from Public

Name: Julia Figueira-McDonough, Associate VP, Economic Justice, Bet Tzedek Legal Services

Date Submitted: 05/18/2026 10:22 AM

Council File No: 15-0989-S65

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers Harris-Dawson, Price, Soto-Martinez, Yaroslavsky, Padilla, Rodriguez and Blumenfield, Bet Tzedek's Employment Rights Project works to advance economic justice for low-wage workers by providing education, legal guidance, and direct representation in matters involving wage theft, unsafe working conditions, retaliation, and other forms of workplace abuse. Our work regularly brings us into contact with workers who are especially vulnerable to coercion and exploitation, including immigrants and others employed in low-wage sectors that are often at heightened risk during large-scale economic development and mega-events. We are deeply concerned that LA28's Human Rights Strategy falls far short of what is needed to prevent human trafficking and labor exploitation in connection with the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. While the Strategy acknowledges trafficking and labor rights as priority areas, it provides no specificity, enforceability, or worker-centered infrastructure required to protect low-wage workers, migrants, youth, and other vulnerable residents before harm occurs. Reports on major sporting events have documented recurring risks including wage theft, excessive recruitment fees, unsafe working conditions, document retention, coercion, and abuse of temporary and migrant labor in construction, hospitality, transportation, cleaning, and other sectors connected to event preparation and operations. Many of the most serious risks emerge early in recruitment and contracting, long before workers arrive at a job site. LA 28's Human Rights Strategy is not, in fact, a strategy. The document acknowledges potential harms without establishing and investing in a detailed plan to prevent them. It relies heavily on existing government systems and bystander reporting and leaves key questions unaddressed and unanswered. What binding labor standards will apply across Games-related contracting? How will workers safely report abuse without fear of retaliation or immigration consequences? What independent monitoring will exist outside of LA28 and law enforcement structures? And, perhaps most importantly, what dedicated resources will be committed to implementation, outreach, language access, and survivor- and worker-centered services? At a minimum, the City should require LA28 to strengthen the Human Rights Strategy

through clear implementation measures: enforceable procurement and contracting standards that prohibit recruitment fees, wage theft, retaliation, and document confiscation; independent monitoring and public reporting on compliance in high-risk sectors; accessible, multilingual, and confidential complaint mechanisms that are not tied to immigration enforcement; meaningful partnerships with worker centers, legal services providers, and survivor-informed community organizations; and a transparent implementation budget and timeline so the public can assess whether the Strategy is being operationalized in practice rather than left as a statement of intent. The City should not treat LA28's Human Rights Strategy as the end of the conversation. A credible strategy must be accompanied by oversight, implementation, and measurable accountability long before the Games begin. Prevention is most effective when protections are built into procurement, permitting, workforce oversight, interagency coordination, and community partnerships from the outset. Trafficking and labor exploitation must be treated not as peripheral risks, but as core human rights and worker protection issues that demand sustained public scrutiny. The world is watching. We have the opportunity to do right by our city and set an example for others. I urge the City Council to use its oversight authority to demand greater transparency, urgency, and specificity in LA28's Human Rights Strategy. Los Angeles should not move forward with broad assurances while leaving vulnerable workers and community members without clearly defined protections, resources, and recourse. If LA28 is serious about delivering a Games that reflects this city's values, its human rights planning must be concrete enough to prevent exploitation, not merely acknowledge the possibility of it. Sincerely, Julia Figueira-McDonough Associate Vice-President, Economic Justice

Los Angeles City Council
Ad Hoc Committee on the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Item # 15-0989-S65, LA28's Human Rights Strategy

Dear Councilmembers Harris-Dawson, Price, Soto-Martinez, Yaroslavsky, Padilla, Rodriguez and Blumenfield,

Bet Tzedek's Employment Rights Project works to advance economic justice for low-wage workers by providing education, legal guidance, and direct representation in matters involving wage theft, unsafe working conditions, retaliation, and other forms of workplace abuse. Our work regularly brings us into contact with workers who are especially vulnerable to coercion and exploitation, including immigrants and others employed in low-wage sectors that are often at heightened risk during large-scale economic development and mega-events.

We are deeply concerned that LA28's Human Rights Strategy falls far short of what is needed to prevent human trafficking and labor exploitation in connection with the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. While the Strategy acknowledges trafficking and labor rights as priority areas, it provides no specificity, enforceability, or worker-centered infrastructure required to protect low-wage workers, migrants, youth, and other vulnerable residents before harm occurs.

Reports on major sporting events have documented recurring risks including wage theft, excessive recruitment fees, unsafe working conditions, document retention, coercion, and abuse of temporary and migrant labor in construction, hospitality, transportation, cleaning, and other sectors connected to event preparation and operations. Many of the most serious risks emerge early in recruitment and contracting, long before workers arrive at a job site.

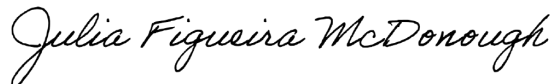
LA 28's Human Rights Strategy is not, in fact, a strategy. The document acknowledges potential harms without establishing and investing in a detailed plan to prevent them. It relies heavily on existing government systems and bystander reporting and leaves key questions unaddressed and unanswered. ***What binding labor standards will apply across Games-related contracting? How will workers safely report abuse without fear of retaliation or immigration consequences? What independent monitoring will exist outside of LA28 and law enforcement structures? And, perhaps most importantly, what dedicated resources will be committed to implementation, outreach, language access, and survivor- and worker-centered services?***

At a minimum, the City should require LA28 to strengthen the Human Rights Strategy through ***clear implementation measures: enforceable procurement and contracting standards that prohibit recruitment fees, wage theft, retaliation, and document confiscation; independent monitoring and public reporting on compliance in high-risk sectors; accessible, multilingual, and confidential complaint mechanisms that are not tied to immigration enforcement; meaningful partnerships with worker centers, legal services providers, and survivor-informed community organizations; and a transparent implementation budget and timeline*** so the public can assess whether the Strategy is being operationalized in practice rather than left as a statement of intent.

The City should not treat LA28's Human Rights Strategy as the end of the conversation. A credible strategy must be accompanied by oversight, implementation, and measurable accountability long before the Games begin. Prevention is most effective when protections are built into procurement, permitting, workforce oversight, interagency coordination, and community partnerships from the outset. Trafficking and labor exploitation must be treated not as peripheral risks, but as core human rights and worker protection issues that demand sustained public scrutiny.

The world is watching. We have the opportunity to do right by our city and set an example for others. I urge the City Council to use its oversight authority to demand greater transparency, urgency, and specificity in LA28's Human Rights Strategy. Los Angeles should not move forward with broad assurances while leaving vulnerable workers and community members without clearly defined protections, resources, and recourse. If LA28 is serious about delivering a Games that reflects this city's values, its human rights planning must be concrete enough to prevent exploitation, not merely acknowledge the possibility of it.

Sincerely,



Julia Figueira-McDonough

Associate Vice-President, Economic Justice