



City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Council File 17-1115 Tour Bus Ordinance

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 7:21 AM

Please attach the email and the accompanying letter to CF 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <sschw56079@aol.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 3:58 AM
Subject: Council File 17-1115 Tour Bus Ordinance
To: <john.white@lacity.org>

Council File 17-1115 Tour Bus Ordinance
(This letter was too long to use your online public comment form) PLEASE ENTER THIS IN THE PUBLIC RECORD
THANK YOU.

I am writing to you as a 42 year resident of Beachwood Drive in Hollywoodland, a past president of the Hollywoodland Homeowners Association, and a founder of Homeowners on Beachwood Drive United. I would appreciate if you could send me an acknowledgement of receipt of this letter if possible.

I strongly support legislation to exempt limited hillside residential streets from tour buses because of safety concerns. Our homes are near the Hollywood Sign, and we are being severely impacted and abused.

Hollywoodland is in a very high fire severity zone and sits as a bottleneck in Griffith Park, 80% surrounded by dry brush. Its unique location, topography, and lack of standard infrastructure make it extremely vulnerable to fires and disasters. It is one of the most threatened and fragile neighborhoods in all of Los Angeles. ALL of the streets in Hollywoodland are substandard even by hillside standards. There are hardly any sidewalks.

While we feel your legislation is a necessity, it needs even more conditions to close obvious loopholes, if it is truly to act as a strong safety measure. You should consider the following additions:

- 1 All street segments with 6000lb weight limits should be exempted. Currently the only way this is enforced is by a special weighing team which means it is rarely or never enforced. A different measure, such as the number of passengers needs to be part of the law so there can be easy and widespread enforcement.
- 2 All substandard street segments with no sidewalks should be exempted. This is obvious to protect the pedestrians and to prevent pedestrian and vehicular congestion in limited streets.

FIRE DANGER HAS BEEN OVERLOOKED IN YOUR REPORT. ALL OVER THE STATE DEVELOPMENT IN VERY HIGH FIRE SEVERITY ZONES IS BEING EXAMINED.

- 3 All substandard street segments in very high fire severity zones should be exempted because of the necessity of easy mobility in these already threatened streets.
- 4 All areas that are extremely impacted by potential fire danger for example Hollywoodland, a bottleneck 80% surrounded by dry brush, with substandard infrastructure, should be exempted.

In addition to tour buses, the City itself is part of the problem and also needs to be restrained in order to become part of the solution.

The City keeps purposely overstating the width, infrastructure and capacity of all of Hollywoodland's narrow, winding, blind-curved dead end streets. For example, the City mischaracterizes Beachwood Drive as a Hillside Collector Street. A Hillside Collector Street consists of a 40 foot wide street with 5 foot sidewalks on each side for a total of 50 feet.

Beachwood Drive north of Belden in Hollywoodland is primarily only 30 feet wide. Only a small portion (Belden to Ledgewood and smaller at the very end not both sides) has 4 feet wide sidewalks on each side. Most of it has none. **How does 30 feet become 50 feet? Beachwood Drive is not only substandard as a hillside collector street, it is substandard in every hillside street category. Data must be accurate.**

In a no wind fire just recently in Hollywoodland October 4th 2019, LAFD in its official report said the following, "Narrow streets and steep grades presented challenges with getting apparatus and equipment to the address.". In Hollywoodland, transportation is not just a matter of mobility, but a matter of life and death. Your decisions have great implications.

Neighborhoods as fragile and threatened as Hollywoodland and streets as limited as Beachwood Drive that just barely serve the everyday needs of residents in very high fire severity zones with limited ingress and egress need to be protected and sheltered for safety reasons as opposed to the current City policies of recklessly and negligently encouraging added tourism, traffic and congestion that will be catastrophic in an emergency. Luck is not an adequate safety strategy for government.

Every few years the City revives a dangerous, negligent, and poorly conceived proposal of running tour buses up Beachwood Drive. I have included our attorney's letter that was sent to the Transportation Committee several years ago where this idea died. **See the above attachment.** But at the same time the City says it is now interested in public safety by proposing limitations on tour buses, Councilman Ryu is shamelessly trying to push them through on Beachwood Drive where they are so obviously a threat to public safety. Besides the two-faced inconsistency, what makes this even more extraordinary is that his push for tour buses at this location violates a recent court decision (upheld through several appeals) to close an illegal access point into Griffith Park at the end of Beachwood.

Two main reasons were cited in the court's decision—the fact that there has never been a public entrance into Griffith Park at the end of Beachwood, and the limited infrastructure can not safely accommodate additional visitors. In the ruling the judge took great pains to direct the public to a specific official entrance into Griffith Park at the end of Canyon Drive where the infrastructure has been developed since the 1940's and is safe. (Homeowners On Beachwood Drive United -- HBDU--was also suing the City at the same time about these similar issues, but formally dropped our suit without prejudice when the other party was successful against the City.) Canyon Drive is 40 feet wide with sidewalks on both sides of this straight street and fulfills the qualifications needed for a Hillside Collector Street.

In recent years Hollywoodland and its streets have been under continuous assault and pressure from the City and tour companies to wrongfully and dangerously become a tourist/Disneyland destination instead of remaining an extremely limited hillside residential neighborhood. When disaster strikes, the loss of life and property will be catastrophic as will also be the financial and criminal liability of the City. Safety must always come first.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarajane Schwartz
Homeowners On Beachwood Drive United

--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072



12/13/2019

City of Los Angeles Mail - Fwd: Council File 17-1115 Tour Bus Ordinance

1415K

LUNA & GLUSHON

ATTORNEYS

16255 VENTURA BOULEVARD, SUITE 1016
ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91436
TEL: 818-907-8755
FAX: 818-907-8760

Century City Office
1801 Century Park East, Suite 2400
Los Angeles, CA 90067

August 28, 2013

BY PERSONAL DELIVERY

Councilmember Mike Bonin
Chair, Transportation Committee
Los Angeles City Council

c/o John White, City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

Re: Council File 13-1094 S1/Agenda Item 8, August 28, 2013

Dear Councilmember Bonin and Committee Members:

Our firm represents the residents and homeowners on upper Beachwood Drive who are the most impacted by the use of this narrow, substandard street for access to the "City land" leading to the Hollywood sign.

As acknowledged in the motions by Councilmember LaBonge (items 7 and 8 on your Agenda today), the current conditions pose an unacceptable risk to public safety because of unrestricted vehicle and pedestrian traffic on a substandard street too narrow to safely accommodate such traffic; without sidewalks forcing pedestrians into the street; too narrow to feasibly and safely handle two-way vehicle traffic; severely impacting the ability of the Fire Department and local emergency responses; and within a high risk fire area that has experienced fires affecting access in recent years.

Simply stated, the situation is a disaster waiting to happen that threatens the lives of not just the local residents, but the thousands of visitors who use Beachwood Drive to get to the Hollywood sign.

Councilmember Mike Bonin
Chair, Transportation Committee
Los Angeles City Council
August 28, 2013
Page Two

It is our understanding that the City's Department of Transportation acknowledges the current unacceptable level of problems affecting traffic and public safety on the upper portion of Beachwood Drive. Thus, the issue before you is what City action should be taken to abate the acknowledged problems.

Although there is no question that the City must take action, Councilmember LaBonge's request for the City Council to authorize a transportation project ferrying people up and down Beachwood Drive is not a solution - it would make the situation worse - and is strongly opposed by the local neighborhood that would be most impacted.

More importantly, although reasonable minds may differ on the merits, as a matter of law, the City Council cannot authorize and implement such "transportation project" without environmental review required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). Without question, such "transportation project" is a "Project" subject to CEQA because it involves a discretionary approval (City Council) and is an activity supported by a public agency (permit, license or other right to use public roadway by transit bus or van) that has a "potential" change and effect on the environment (i.e.: traffic, noise, public safety and resources, air pollution, etc.).

CEQA applies to all discretionary projects proposed or approved by a public agency that do not fall within a statutory exemption. Pub.Res.C. 21080(a); *Sierra Club v. Napa County Bd. Of Sup'rs* (App. 1 Dist. 2012) 205 Cal.App.4th 162. If a project is discretionary, the agency may not grant the permit without first determining in writing whether the proposal has a significant environmental impact, and mandamus lies to set aside a permit issued without that determination. *Friends of Juana Briones House v. City of Palo Alto* (2010) 190 Cal.App.4th 286.

In *Save Tara v. City of West Hollywood* (2008) 45 Cal 4th 116, the California Supreme Court held that even a City's agreement to sell land for private development coupled with financial support, public statements, and other actions by its officials committing the city to the development, was, for CEQA purposes, an approval of the **project** that was required under sections 21100 and 21151 to have been preceded by preparation of an environmental impact report.

Councilmember Mike Bonin
Chair, Transportation Committee
Los Angeles City Council
August 28, 2013
Page Three

In *Friends of Westwood v. City of Los Angeles* (1987) 191 Cal.App.3d 259, the Court of Appeal reversed the trial court's decision that a "building permit" was ministerial and therefore not subject to CEQA. Such decision was based on the fact that the City (including its City departments) were exercising discretion on various issues including traffic access.

In *Day v. City of Glendale* (1975) 51 Cal.App.3d 817, the Court held that the issuance of a *grading* permit for a highway construction project involved enough discretionary elements to invoke environmental review under CEQA. It did so even though grading permits, like building permits, had been listed in the original version of AB 889 as "ministerial projects" and even though the Glendale City Council had classified grading permits as "ministerial" projects categorically exempt from CEQA.

While the idea of ferrying visitors in buses or vans might appear to be a good idea, we believe that CEQA review including a traffic study would reveal the potential for making the situation even worse and more unsafe. That is because the use of any large bus or van will itself be unsafe on this narrow substandard street and will be in addition to, not in lieu of, already hazardous vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Any arguable reduction in the numbers of vehicles would be offset by the increased risk posed by any oversized bus or van competing with other vehicles and people walking in the street for access.

Again, as a matter of law, the City Council must first authorize environmental review, including potential impacts on public safety, traffic, public services, noise and air pollution before taking any action to implement any proposed "transportation project" on Beachwood Drive.

We are also transmitting petitions strongly opposing the City's authorization and implementation of any plan to use bus or related transit on Beachwood Drive for the reasons set forth above. We are mindful of the legitimate City interests involved with the Hollywood sign and the adjacent City trail for access. However, those interests must be balanced against the need to have reasonable regulations and mitigation to protect public safety and the rights of Beachwood Canyon Residents.

Public safety must be the highest priority.

Councilmember Mike Bonin
Chair, Transportation Committee
Los Angeles City Council
August 28, 2013
Page Four

The Committee and City Council should not take any action, including funding and implementation, for any transportation project (whether pilot project or not) using the substandard, narrow street of upper Beachwood Drive for visitor access to City land including the trail access to the Hollywood sign. If the Committee and City Council wishes to do so, it must direct the preparation of an initial study under CEQA and have the appropriate City agency conduct a full and complete environmental review including the potential impacts set forth above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

LUNA & GLUSHON



ROBERT L. GLUSHON



City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Per Anastasia Mann, Regarding Tour Bus behavior, FOR ITEM FILE #17-1115

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 7:59 AM

To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV DeVincentis** <dvdevincentis@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:27 PM

Subject: Per Anastasia Mann, Regarding Tour Bus behavior, FOR ITEM FILE #17-1115

To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <John.white@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>

Cc: Anastasia Mann <anastasia@corniche.com>, Paul Golding <paulgolding2@me.com>, Stacy Sillins <s.sillins@nicholscanyon.org>

Hello To All.

My name is Daniel DeVincentis (DV), and I am a homeowner on Mulholland Drive in the Hollywood Hills. At Anastasia Mann's behest, I am about to forward a number of emails to all of you, containing just a small sampling of our enormous pile of photo and video evidence of extremely dangerous tour bus behavior. I will also note that these emails do not even approach the fire hazard, the illegal noise, the garbage, or the traffic jams that these companies produce.

The following e-mails will show the systemic and constant dangerous behavior that these companies — all of them, including the “good ones” like Starline — take part in. They also show not just the disregard for residents, but in some cases actual *verbal attacks* on us, through now-illegal PA systems, for the entertainment of their customers in our otherwise quiet neighborhood.

After years of meetings and hearings and outreach, trying to find some compromise with the operators, literally nothing has changed. The operators and companies are still as dangerous, and as much of a nuisance as they were six years ago. It is the same.

There are two options to solve the safety crisis we in this neighborhood live in, every day. 1) permanent police presence — two units dedicated to traffic in the zones that the tour buses have made mine fields, or 2) Ban tour buses in this neighborhood. We can all agree that the former is untenable and a waste of city dollars. Intermittent police presence does nothing — the operators eat the one ticket, knowing that it will be months before they get another; it's simply the cost of doing business. And so, if we are to actually solve this, the latter is the only answer. Again, if we don't nothing will change and we will all go to more meetings for no reason.

I would attend the meeting today personally, but am out of town and heard too late about the scheduling to change my plans.

I want to thank you so much in advance for your past and present work on this matter. We are all really overwhelmed and frightened by these companies, on a daily basis.

With that, I will now go forward you emails.

Sincerely,

DV

Daniel DeVincentis
7524 Mulholland Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90046

--

John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072





City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Starline traffic jam

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:00 AM

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

Disregard attached video

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV Devinentis** <dvdevinentis@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:29 PM

Subject: Fwd: Starline traffic jam

To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <John.white@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>

Don't let Starline tell you that they tight ship. They may be the most respectful and responsible, but here's the bar they set:

More Starline, parked illegally in the street.

--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072





6 attachments



IMG_5447 2.jpeg
71K



Starline in road 2.jpeg
153K



IMG_0705.jpeg
67K



IMG_2447.jpeg
54K

IMG_5396.jpeg
101K



 **Starline traffic.mov**
4888K



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City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: OPEN BUS TOURS

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:00 AM

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

Disregard attached video

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV Devinentis** <dvdevinentis@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:31 PM
Subject: Fwd: OPEN BUS TOURS
To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>, <John.white@lacity.org>

All of these Open Bus Tours vehicles are PARKED. On illegal and dangerous shoulders, or in the middle of the road.

--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072



4 attachments

IMG_1808.jpeg
110K



OpenBusTourEdge.jpeg
99K



IMG_4864.jpeg
120K

 **open bus tours van intersection.mov**
7289K





MOVIE STAR HOMES AND FILM LOCATIONS

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City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Open Bus Tours, parked IN Renee's driveway

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:01 AM

Please attach this email to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV Devinentis** <dvdevinentis@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:35 PM
Subject: Fwd: Open Bus Tours, parked IN Renee's driveway
To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>, <John.white@lacity.org>

This one goes out to you, Nick.

This is a van parked in my neighbor Renee's driveway. Many companies park in this driveway, and lie to their customers about who lives there.

Blind curve, illegal parking, trespassing. All day, every day.



--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee

12/13/2019

City of Los Angeles Mail - Fwd: Open Bus Tours, parked IN Renee's driveway

(213) 978-1072





City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Ultimate Hollywood tours IN Quentin Tarantino's driveway, trespassing

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:02 AM

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV Devinentis** <dvdevinentis@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:39 PM
Subject: Fwd: Ultimate Hollywood tours IN Quentin Tarantino's driveway, trespassing
To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>, <John.white@lacity.org>

Literally in the driveway. Illegal, dangerous, trespassing, and inviting a major security risk, considering the occupant.

And below that, more of Ultimate Hollywood Tours illegal and dangerous parking and driving. I have an endless supply of these guys.







—
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072







City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: HOLLYWOOD VALUE TOURS - Illegal stop, blind corner, and trespassing.

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:02 AM

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DV Devinentis** <dvdevinentis@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 11, 2019 at 2:37 PM
Subject: Fwd: HOLLYWOOD VALUE TOURS - Illegal stop, blind corner, and trespassing.
To: <Nury.martinez@lacity.org>, <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, <Paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, <ngreif@gmail.com>, Mark Buck <33215@lapd.online>, <John.white@lacity.org>

These guys are terrible. The first one is their van in my neighbor's driveway. Illegal stop, blind corner, and trespassing.





--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072





City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Tour Bus Ordinance CF 17-1115

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 8:51 AM

Please attach to Council file No. 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gwen Slaughter** <Gwen.Slaughter@starlinetours.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 12:30 PM
Subject: Tour Bus Ordinance CF 17-1115
To: Mike.bonin@lacity.org <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, paul.koretz@lacity.org <paul.koretz@lacity.org>, nury.martinez@lacity.org <nury.martinez@lacity.org>, john.white@lacity.org <john.white@lacity.org>, [David Ryu](mailto:David.Ryu@lacity.org) <david.ryu@lacity.org>, [Nicholas Greif](mailto:nicholas.greif@lacity.org) <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, [Brian Gallagher](mailto:brian.gallagher@lacity.org) <brian.gallagher@lacity.org>
Cc: [Kami Farhadi](mailto:Kami.Farhadi@starlinetours.com) <Kami.Farhadi@starlinetours.com>, vahid@tourcoach.com <vahid@tourcoach.com>, jason@liebergalperin.com <jason@liebergalperin.com>

Good morning All,

I am reaching out again regarding the referenced proposed ordinance.

Firstly, thank you again for your reconsideration of the finalization of the specifics regarding the proposed ordinance and hearing our voice at the meeting on September 25, 2019, even though it was postponed. Since that meeting, we have not received any updates from anyone and would like an update as well as being kept informed of these issues as it does directly impact our business as well as tourism in the City of Los Angeles.

As stated in the below email, Starline Tours would like to be a part of the solution to a very sensitive matter which concerns us all. We do believe that we could help to achieve the goals of the City in addressing the problems that currently exist. To be clear, Starline agrees that tour bus regulation is critically needed. However, it is equally important that any new regulations be effective and we believe we can provide invaluable assistance in that process not available elsewhere, as we have been dealing with these exact issues in one way or another for decades.

On August 28, 2019, I requested to have a meeting with Brian Gallagher's office, in addition to other attempts, to discuss some of our ideas to help but to this day have not received any response. As stated in the below email, we have not been contacted regarding this issue. Again, I am requesting a meeting to discuss possible workable solutions to the problems at hand. Please know that Starline Tours is committed to helping to solve the issues and provide a needed service to visitors to our city while respecting the residents of the communities we traverse in a safe manner. I do look forward to receiving a response.

Thank you,

Gwen Slaughter
General Manager

[6801 Hollywood Blvd – Suite 305, Hollywood, CA 90028](https://www.starlinetours.com)

Main Line: (323) 785 6700 Direct Line: (323) 785 6376 Cell: (310) 508 8102

E-mail: Gwen.Slaughter@starlinetours.com Website: www.starlinetours.com Live Feed: <http://starlinetours.com/hollywoodLive>



Angeles.

Starline Tours is certified as a Green Business by the City of LA Green Business. This recognition signifies that we are conducting our business using strategies aimed at improving employee wellness and productivity, energy savings, water efficiency, resource stewardship and reducing CO2 emissions. This seal shows our commitment to incorporating sustainable practices at every level of our operations as we continue striving to reduce our impact on the environment through sustainable practices and source reduction initiatives. We take pride in being part of the growing green business community of Los

From: Gwen Slaughter

Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2019 4:36 PM

To: Mike.bonin@lacity.org; paul.koretz@lacity.org; nury.martinez@lacity.org; john.white@lacity.org; David Ryu <david.ryu@lacity.org>; Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>; Brian Gallagher <brian.gallagher@lacity.org>

Cc: Kami Farhadi <Kami.Farhadi@starlinetours.com>; Vahid Sapir <Vahid@tourcoach.com>

Subject: Tour bus Ordinance CF 17-1115

September 24, 2019

The Honorable Mike Bonin.

Chair of the Transportation Committee

City of Los Angeles

200 N. Spring St.

[Los Angeles, CA 90012](#)

Dear Councilmember Bonin and Members of the Transportation Committee;

In reference to the Tour Bus Ordinance CF 17-1115

Tourism in the City of Los Angeles is an integral part of the makeup and as an important revenue stream for the city. It also allows tour companies to showcase Los Angeles to its many visitors from around the globe. We are very cognizant of the impact these services may have on the residents and general public.

We at Starline Tours of Hollywood are supportive of regulations to enforce safety on the streets of Los Angeles. Safety of the passengers aboard our tour buses and the general public is of utmost concern to us. We want to be a part of the solution and not the problem. There are, however, small procedural concerns we have as to one specific section within the ordinance.

We believe that once you hear our explanation of this one issue, you will agree with our position.

Specifically, we strongly believe that tour operators should be responsible for repeat violations for individual drivers, independent from all other drivers, and not the entire staff of that operator's employee drivers collectively. The operator must be responsible for every individual driver they employ.

We believe that the amendment added to LAMC Section 80.36.11 making the operator solely responsible for violations by the driver does not adequately address the problem issues and achieve the goals as set out by the City.

In order to properly address and achieve these goals, we believe that the driver should not be absolved from his or her duties as a commercial bus driver within the law, which is the safe and careful operation of the vehicle. Without the backing of the law, it allows drivers to circumvent the law without responsibility.

We believe that it is in the best interest of the City to revise this amendment to make the driver and operator responsible for violations. We believe the operator should be solely responsible only when multiple violations by the same driver occurs and there is no action on the part of the operator to correct and eliminated. The driver also needs to be responsible for violations by having a record of these violations on his or her driving record. This dual responsibility will prevent drivers from moving from one operator to another if they choose to leave.

This revision will also help to ensure that the safe and law abiding drivers remain on the road and continue to provide a great service to visitors to the City of Los Angeles via tourism, which is an integral component to Los Angeles.

Making an operator solely responsible for the actions of a driver after having discussions with the driver and training the driver, as well as putting strict disciplinary procedures into place, is giving a free pass to a qualified commercial driver to misbehave. As written, this law requires the owner of a sightseeing company to be responsible for all violations for all drivers collectively, as they should be, within the company, which could lead to criminal offenses and penalties.

Finally, we realize that we are coming in the 11th hour on this matter. It was mentioned in a letter to the Council that a meeting was held with residents of HHWNC on April 17, 2019, from 7am to 9am, of which tour bus operators were invited as well as two subsequent meetings. However, probably unintentionally, Starline Tours was never notified. We would have liked to have been a part of these discussions early on and are now asking for reconsideration on the amendment referenced above. We want to ensure we can help achieve the objectives that the City is aiming for.

Respectively submitted,

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Starline Tours is certified as a Green Business by the City of LA Green Business. This recognition signifies that we are conducting our business using strategies aimed at improving employee wellness and productivity, energy savings, water efficiency, resource stewardship and reducing CO2 emissions. This seal shows our commitment to incorporating sustainable practices at every level of our operations as we continue striving to reduce our impact on the environment through sustainable practices and source reduction initiatives. We take pride in being part of the growing green business community of Los Angeles.

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