

Communication from Public

Name: Build with Strength Coalition Partners - Support

Date Submitted: 01/04/2022 02:14 PM

Council File No: 19-0603

Comments for Public Posting: December 30, 2021 RE: Support 19-0603 – Building a Safer Los Angeles (Blumenfield/Rodriguez) Dear Chairman Harris-Dawson: December 3rd, 2021 marked the (2) two-year anniversary since the PLUM committee unanimously approved Councilmember Blumenfield and Rodriguez’s motion, Building a Safer Los Angeles. As the anniversary came and went, we were unfortunately reminded of the deep seeded inequities that exist in our city when it comes to safety and equality. Special interest groups are now attacking this measure because they fear their ability to make huge sums of money by building large, unsafe market rate and affordable housing in poor neighborhoods is threatened. We ask you, Chairman Harris-Dawson, as a defender of marginalized communities, to not let these groups shut down a worthwhile effort by letting them spread misinformation. There are legitimate groups that have weighed in on this issue, and we respect them, but unfortunately the loudest of voices are those with the most money. Just this past week an article appeared in the conservative Pacific Research Institute (PRI) newsletter with a patently incorrect, false, and inflammatory headline: “Los Angeles is gearing up to ban wood frame construction, Renters will soon pay the price”. Several things to consider: First, PRI is a pay to play organization and a member of the right-wing State Policy Network. Second, the motion ‘Building a Safer Los Angeles’ does not ban wood. Third, the motion would not raise the price of construction since the price of noncombustible materials is far cheaper than traditional wood construction when building multi-family housing. Fourth, noncombustible materials are safer, cheaper to insure, more sustainable, and last much longer than traditional construction. This is just one more attempt by special interests to build fast, cheap, and dangerous multi-family housing at the expense of low income residents, primarily communities of color. Even your own Department of Building and Safety has stated that this measure does not ban any specific material. Instead, it provides additional protections to existing codes that are critical to the future of our community’s safety. The motion has been approved twice by Councilmember Rodriguez’s Public Safety Committee and is now awaiting another hearing in the PLUM Committee prior to being transmitted to the full City Council. The most recent version that

was passed by the Public Safety Committee reduces the footprint of the areas within the City of Los Angeles covered under the motion but covers the important parts of the city that are most vulnerable and are experiencing high-density development. We continue to be concerned, as religious, business, and nonprofit leaders in California representing minority and community organizations, that so much time has passed since the motion was first heard in PLUM. This motion is important to us and the communities that our organizations serve throughout Los Angeles. As a result of the important leadership of Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez, the Building a Safer Los Angeles motion ensures resilience, durability, sustainability, and affordability in future multifamily construction projects. If passed, the motion will provide safer housing for residents for years to come while not placing an economic burden on multi-family building developers. The proposed motion will provide increased fire-life safety protection by expanding Fire District #1 without creating any obstacles toward the construction of new units. It also works seamlessly with the approved regulations for type #4 and #5 construction such as firewalls, sprinklers and areas of use regulations that already exist. Respectfully, we urge the PLUM Committee to first schedule and then pass this important motion. Our efforts are supported by housing advocates, architects, engineers, emergency services personnel, faith leaders, and community activists who only want to make Los Angeles safer. Please don't be fooled by special interest groups that are not considering the safety of our communities. Thank you for your ongoing leadership in the City Council. Sincerely, Walter Contreras Vice President, NALEC Gloria Colazo El Salvador Chamber of Commerce Ecuadorian American Chamber of Commerce California Rabbi Jonathan D. Klein, He/Him/His Co-Founder & Consultant/Advisor Former Executive Director/Secretary HOPE for All: Helping Others Prosper Economically Rabbi, Temple Beth El Bakersfield



December 30, 2021

RE: Support 19-0603 – Building a Safer Los Angeles (Blumenfield/Rodriguez)

Dear Chairman Harris-Dawson:

December 3rd, 2021 marked the (2) two-year anniversary since the PLUM committee unanimously approved Councilmember Blumenfield and Rodriguez's motion, *Building a Safer Los Angeles*.

As the anniversary came and went, we were unfortunately reminded of the deep seeded inequities that exist in our city when it comes to safety and equality. Special interest groups are now attacking this measure because they fear their ability to make huge sums of money by building large, unsafe market rate and affordable housing in poor neighborhoods is threatened. We ask you, Chairman Harris-Dawson, as a defender of marginalized communities, to not let these groups shut down a worthwhile effort by letting them spread misinformation.

There are legitimate groups that have weighed in on this issue, and we respect them, but unfortunately the loudest of voices are those with the most money. Just this past week an article appeared in the conservative Pacific Research Institute (PRI) newsletter with a patently **incorrect, false, and inflammatory** headline: *“Los Angeles is gearing up to ban wood frame construction, Renters will soon pay the price”*.

Several things to consider: First, PRI is a *pay to play* organization and a member of the right-wing State Policy Network. **Second**, the motion ‘Building a Safer Los Angeles’ does not ban wood. **Third**, the motion would not raise the price of construction since the price of noncombustible materials is far cheaper than traditional wood construction when building multi-family housing. **Fourth**, noncombustible materials are safer, cheaper to insure, more sustainable, and last much longer than traditional construction.

This is just one more attempt by special interests to build fast, cheap, and dangerous multi-family housing at the expense of low income residents, primarily communities of color. Even your own Department of Building and Safety has stated that this measure does not ban any specific material. Instead, it provides additional protections to existing codes that are critical to the future of our community's safety.

The motion has been approved twice by Councilmember Rodriguez's Public Safety Committee and is now awaiting another hearing in the PLUM Committee prior to being transmitted to the full City Council. The most recent version that was passed by the Public Safety Committee reduces the footprint of the areas within the City of Los Angeles covered under the motion but covers the important parts of the city that are most vulnerable and are experiencing high-density development.

We continue to be concerned, as religious, business, and nonprofit leaders in California representing minority and community organizations, that so much time has passed since the motion was first heard in PLUM. This motion is important to us and the communities that our organizations serve throughout Los Angeles.

As a result of the important leadership of Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez, the *Building a Safer Los Angeles* motion ensures resilience, durability, sustainability, and affordability in future multifamily construction projects. If passed, the motion will provide safer housing for residents for years to come while not placing an economic burden on multi-family building developers.

The proposed motion will provide increased fire-life safety protection by expanding Fire District #1 **without creating any obstacles toward the construction of new units**. It also works seamlessly with the approved regulations for type #4 and #5 construction such as firewalls, sprinklers and areas of use regulations that already exist.

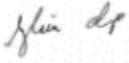
Respectfully, we urge the PLUM Committee to first schedule and then pass this important motion. Our efforts are supported by housing advocates, architects, engineers, emergency services personnel, faith leaders, and community activists who only want to make Los Angeles safer. Please don't be fooled by special interest groups that are not considering the safety of our communities.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership in the City Council.

Sincerely,

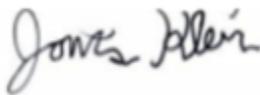


Walter Contreras
Vice President, NALEC



Gloria Colazo
El Salvador Chamber of
Commerce

Ecuadorian American Chamber of
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**Rabbi Jonathan D.
Klein, He/Him/His**

Co-Founder &
Consultant/Advisor

Former Executive
Director/Secretary

**HOPE for All: Helping
Others Prosper
Economically**

Rabbi, Temple Beth El
Bakersfield