

Communication from Public

Name: Stephanie Klasky-Gamer

Date Submitted: 06/21/2021 03:06 PM

Council File No: 19-0603

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles City Council Public Safety Committee 200 N. Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 Re: Expansion of Fire District 1, Council File 19-0603, Item 2, Hearing on 6/2/21 Dear Council Members: On behalf of LA Family Housing, I am writing in opposition of the motion to explore the expansion of Fire District 1, upon which the Public Safety Committee recently heard a report on Wednesday, June 2nd. Our organization has developments across the City of Los Angeles, and we are committed to continuing the development of permanent, high quality, below market rate homes for low and extremely low-income residents. As detailed in the report submitted to the Committee from the Fire Department (LAFD) and Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), expanding Fire District 1 would be extremely harmful to the future production of affordable housing. Such an expansion would limit developers' access to land, increase building costs, and eliminate the efficient and sustainable building approach used by affordable housing developers in our region. We strongly encourage you to vote against this motion when it comes before the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) committee. Cost analyses from LADBS data show that buildings constructed in Type I, II, and III (the only types permitted in Fire District 1) cost 15-47% more than those constructed in Type IV and V. Additionally, a survey of 84 properties funded by HCIDLA showed that the majority were constructed in the buildings types disallowed by Fire District 1. Because of these existing limitations, "there are [already] very few HCIDLA-financed projects located in Fire District 1 areas." A further expansion of Fire District 1 would "likely reduce the financial feasibility of [new] affordable housing projects." The report also argues that the California Building Code, along with Los Angeles' own fire code, provide ample protection for our City's residents as is. When clad in fire retardant material such as stucco, wood framing used in Type IV construction is a safe building material. Outside of Fire District 1, affordable housing developers frequently rely on such building methods throughout the City without trouble. Out of the ten other jurisdictions surveyed in the report (including San Diego, San Francisco, and cities in Los Angeles and Orange counties), none used fire districts in addition to the state building code. This demonstrates that this district is an outdated tool for

fire control, and an expansion of its boundaries is not a viable approach for increasing safety in the City of Los Angeles. While our organization is fully committed to promoting and ensuring public safety, we believe that the report submitted to the Committee clearly demonstrates why expanding Fire District 1 is not the best way to keep Angelenos safe. For all of these reasons, please vote no on this motion. We are hopeful that the City Council will explore other options to increasing fire safety that do not make our city's housing crisis worse. Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to affordable housing in Los Angeles. Sincerely, Stephanie Klasky-Gamer President & CEO
LA Family Housing

LA FAMILY HOUSING

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June 21, 2021

Los Angeles City Council
Public Safety Committee
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Expansion of Fire District 1, Council File 19-0603, Item 2, Hearing on 6/2/21

Dear Council Members:

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As detailed in the report submitted to the Committee from the Fire Department (LAFD) and Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), **expanding Fire District 1 would be extremely harmful to the future production of affordable housing. Such an expansion would limit developers' access to land, increase building costs, and eliminate the efficient and sustainable building approach used by affordable housing developers in our region.**

We strongly encourage you to vote against this motion when it comes before the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) committee.

Cost analyses from LADBS data show that buildings constructed in Type I, II, and III (the only types permitted in Fire District 1) cost 15-47% more than those constructed in Type IV and V. Additionally, a survey of 84 properties funded by HCIDLA showed that the majority were constructed in the buildings types disallowed by Fire District 1. Because of these existing limitations, "there are [already] very few HCIDLA-financed projects located in Fire District 1 areas." A further expansion of Fire District 1 would "likely reduce the financial feasibility of [new] affordable housing projects."

The report also argues that the California Building Code, along with Los Angeles' own fire code, provide ample protection for our City's residents as is. When clad in fire retardant material such as stucco, wood framing used in Type IV construction is a safe building material. Outside of Fire District 1, affordable housing developers frequently rely on such building methods throughout the City without trouble.

Out of the ten other jurisdictions surveyed in the report (including San Diego, San Francisco, and cities in Los Angeles and Orange counties), *none* used fire districts in addition to the state building code. This demonstrates that this district is an outdated tool for fire control, and an expansion of its boundaries is not a viable approach for increasing safety in the City of Los Angeles.

While our organization is fully committed to promoting and ensuring public safety, we believe that the report submitted to the Committee clearly demonstrates why expanding Fire District 1 is not the best way to keep Angelenos safe.

For all of these reasons, please vote no on this motion. We are hopeful that the City Council will explore other options to increasing fire safety that do not make our city's housing crisis worse.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to affordable housing in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Klasky-Gamer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stephanie Klasky-Gamer
President & CEO

