

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Rev. Walter Contreras, V.P., Western Chapter NaLEC  
**Date Submitted:** 08/30/2021 08:40 PM  
**Council File No:** 19-0603  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Attached Letter of SUPPORT for Building A Safer Los Angeles Council File 19-0603, submitted by Rev. Walter Contreras, Vice President, Western Chapter NaLEC.



August 25, 2021

Los Angeles City Council  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: SUPPORT for 19-0603 - Building A Safer Los Angeles**

Dear Chairman Harris-Dawson, and Councilmembers Cedillo, Blumenfield, Ridley-Thomas, and Lee and PLUM committee staff members:

I am Vice President of the Western Chapter of National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC) an organization that seeks to respond to a real need for Latino and Latina Evangelical voices committed to the common good and justice in the public sphere. The aim is to both provide alternative voices to the existing partisan voices and to create national awareness about the growing number of Latino Evangelicals who are not captive to partisan politics. NaLEC initiatives can provide a platform for this growing and often unheard demographic.

As you know, housing prices in Los Angeles are at an all-time high driving many low-income residents in search of multifamily affordable housing closer to the Wildland-Urban Interface, leaving them at a greater risk for devastating fires. As we have experienced and seen, gusty winds rapidly spread fires wiping out entire communities and taking lives in the process.

Resilience in housing is vital to protect lives and property. Low-income families, many of whom are minority and multicultural, must be protected because they often have difficulty recovering from fires and take longer to recover from loss of property and find replacement housing.

The San Fernando Valley as well as other portions of the City of Los Angeles are especially vulnerable to areas affected by high winds, high temperatures, and years of drought. As a community, we have worked with government agencies to improve building and safety regulations that preserve our unique community in the face of development, fires, and major earthquakes. Protecting the communities in Los Angeles, mid-city and the San Fernando Valley from fire is a primary concern.

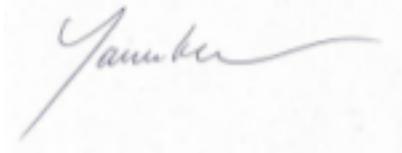
The proposed motion by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez ***Building a Safer Los Angeles*** will make sure multifamily mid-rise buildings require the use of fire-resistant building materials. ***Building A Safer Los Angeles*** does not ban the use of any construction material and will allow developers to build much needed affordable housing with resiliency in mind.

There are already measures in the city of Los Angeles that address increased fire risk in densely populated communities through the City's Building Code and Fire District 1. ***Building A Safer Los Angeles*** motion identifies areas in the city where the stricter code dictates that builders and construction workers use enhanced fire protections and fire-resistant materials during the building process. This motion expands Fire District 1 to cover five percent of the city, which includes many of Los Angeles' high density, commercial zones. The expansion of Fire District 1 will include more neighborhoods and

provide the much-needed fire life-safety that will preserve lives and property. These are critical first steps to protect more of our communities across the city.

Thank you in advance for your leadership and support in protecting the citizens of Los Angeles. Please support the ***Building a Safer Los Angeles*** Motion and move it to the full council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walter Contreras", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a faint, illegible stamp or watermark.

Rev. Walter Contreras  
Vice President, Western Chapter NaLEC