

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Michaé De La Cuadra

**Date Submitted:** 12/18/2020 04:15 PM

**Council File No:** 20-0600

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee, My name is Michae De La Cuadra with the TransLatin@ Coalition. The TransLatin@ Coalition is a direct service provider to transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex (TGI) communities in Los Angeles. Our services are critical and life-saving to many TGI people across LA city. As an organization that represents the voice of TGI people, we believe that the Budget and Finance Committee should utilize the resources being divested from the Sheriff's department and the Los Angeles Police Department into the wellbeing of TGI communities.

Councilmember Paul Krekorian  
Council District 2  
200 N. Spring St., Room 435  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr.  
Council District 9  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 420,  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilmember Paul Koretz  
Council District 5  
200 N Spring Street, Suite 440  
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Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Council District 3  
200 N. Spring St. #415  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilmember Mike Bonin  
Council District 11  
200 N. Spring St., Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Dear Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee,**

My name is Michaé De La Cuadra with the TransLatin@ Coalition. The TransLatin@ Coalition is a direct service provider to transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex (TGI) communities in Los Angeles. Our services are critical and life-saving to many TGI people across LA city. As an organization that represents the voice of TGI people, we believe that the Budget and Finance Committee should utilize the resources being divested from the Sheriff's department and the Los Angeles Police Department into the wellbeing of TGI communities.

In Los Angeles, like most jurisdictions around the country, there is little data or research on how many people identify as transgender, gender-non-conforming, or intersex (TGI) in jail and the drivers of their incarceration. For this reason, TGI people are often left out of conversations regarding incarceration and the specific needs and issues are not addressed.

Despite the lack of data in the county, nationally, we know that people who identify as TGI have higher incarceration rates than adults in the U.S. generally. Many TGI people in jail are people of color; survivors of violence and trauma; have unmet health needs; and experience pervasive discrimination because of their gender identity. We must address the structural and institutional barriers that TGI people face nationwide but particularly in our beautiful city.

Many of the factors that push TGI people to incarceration relate to the structural and institutional barriers that people face daily, such as housing instability or houselessness, discrimination, lack of education, etc. Many TGI people are economically marginalized because of pervasive discrimination based on gender identity and make money for survival in ways that increase the chances of arrest. This makes it difficult to find and maintain stable employment, which is why transgender and gender-non-conforming people have double the unemployment rate as the national average and are more likely to have incomes below the federal poverty line.

Health disparities, homelessness, access to education, employment discrimination, family rejection and the multiplicity of issues that we face, place us as one of the most economically disadvantaged people in our society. To date, there is an estimated 1,019 homeless trans people in greater LA County, 20% only placed in shelters. As we know, the City of Los Angeles is known to set precedence regarding many different issues and we are glad that as an organization, we have been able to influence some of the changes that have happened in our city over the years.

However, unfortunately, our city has not been able to intentionally invest in trans lives and trans-led organizations the way it should, and the way we deserve, trans Angelenos have not had equity in distribution of resources. We are asking that resources be allocated to our community so that we may build services that allow us to thrive.

Services needed for our community include emergency and transitional housing, workforce development programs, re-entry programs, arts, wellness, and healing based programs and much more. These services must be created and funded with community leadership in mind, and with TGI people in the process of their development. TGI led organizations should be supported to continue to provide services to trans people in Los Angeles. Funds for trans led organizations should be also allocated to support building the infrastructure of grassroots trans led groups and organizations who are in the beginning phase of building their services, particularly, Black and Brown trans led organizations in the City of Los Angeles.

These funds should go to community-based organizations directly and not to any city departments. When funding is funneled through local government agencies, funding is diluted and very little money will reach organizations who have been doing the work to support communities of color with little to no funds. It is important that this money is allocated as indicated by our mayor in June of this year. Mayor Garcetti stated that “we could invest in jobs, in health, in education, and in healing. And that those dollars need to be focused on our black community here in Los Angeles, as well as communities of color, and women, and people who have been left behind, for too long.”

We support this statement and the allocation of resources to Black communities across the city, especially those of which are trans. In addition, trans communities as a whole have been left behind historically, which has led to our positionality today. We hope that LA city can change history and invest in our community’s future.

We are looking forward to working with you in making sure that the needs and issues of the local TGI community are addressed and that the organizations that are trans led and provide these services are equitable funded to support to better the livelihood of the local TGI community.

Sincerely,

Michaé De La Cuadra  
Manager of Policy & Community Engagement, TransLatin@ Coalition.