

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: My name is Sean Levi, Founder and CEO of Planet Green in Chatsworth. Planet Green was the company that originally brought the issue of printer cartridge waste to Councilmember John Lee and LA Sanitation, highlighting why remanufacturing is such a critical part of reducing plastic waste in our city and across the country. I started Planet Green in 1999 with just \$6,500 in a 700-square-foot space in Canoga Park. By 2006, we had grown enough to purchase a 30,000-square-foot industrial building in Chatsworth, employ 130 people, and remanufacture over 150,000 printer cartridges every month, supplying thousands of U.S. resellers nationwide. Back then, the cartridge remanufacturing industry in the U.S. was thriving. The San Fernando Valley was considered the global center of printer cartridge remanufacturing. Here in the 818 area code alone, the industry included companies such as: Micro Solutions Printing Technology Future Graphics Image 2000 Inkjet Renew MB Sales Laser Imaging Trading Connections A&H Services Core Recovery Farouda Toner Toner Zone Image Technologies Imaging Resource Ink 2000 Lid Factory NER Data Products R&R Services Titan Recycling Uninet Imaging Unitone These are only a fraction of the companies that once contributed to a \$7 billion U.S. remanufacturing industry, creating thousands of jobs and significantly reducing plastic waste by keeping cartridges in circulation. Today, almost all of them are gone. Why? Because the U.S. market has been flooded with cheap, disposable, single-use printer cartridges manufactured overseas. These products oversupply the market, eliminate the economic incentive to remanufacture, and often end up discarded before ever being used. One storage facility recently contacted us after discovering over 200,000 expired single-use cartridges abandoned in a unit—cartridges that ultimately had to be thrown away. In 2010, roughly 350 million cartridges were ending up in U.S. landfills each year. Today, that number is likely closer to half a billion. And because manufacturers of single-use cartridges offer no take-back or recycling programs, cities and taxpayers are left to absorb the environmental and financial burden. This proposed ordinance—to ban the sale and distribution of single-use printer cartridges—is not only urgently needed; it is fully aligned with commitments the Council has already made. You have already

passed a resolution supporting federal and state bans on single-use cartridges. You have also approved LA Sanitation's Comprehensive Plastics Waste Reduction Plan, which specifically identifies banning single-use printer cartridges as a recommended strategy. There was a time when used OEM printer cartridges had real monetary value. Schools, nonprofits, e-waste companies, and collection brokers all relied on cartridge collection as a revenue source while supplying remanufacturers. That system kept millions of cartridges out of landfills. Today, most used OEM cartridges have no value at all. Many e-waste companies will not accept them because there is no viable downstream outlet. Even school fundraisers have abandoned cartridge drives because they no longer generate meaningful returns. Without a functional remanufacturing industry, there is no solution for used cartridge waste. Municipalities and taxpayers are left to pay for processing this enormous volume of plastic while overseas manufacturers continue flooding the U.S. with disposable, non-recyclable products. This ordinance is essential if we want to reduce plastic waste, restore a sustainable U.S. remanufacturing sector, protect jobs here in Los Angeles, and shift responsibility back to the producers—not the public. The City of Los Angeles has the opportunity to do more than support these measures—you can act on them. You can take a leadership position by passing this ordinance and show the rest of the country that Los Angeles is serious about reducing plastic waste and supporting U.S. circular economies. Thank you. Sean Levi

