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California State Senate

SENATOR
MARÍA ELENA DURAZO
TWENTY-SIXTH SENATE DISTRICT



CHAIR:
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
NO. 5 ON PUBLIC
SAFETY, JUDICIARY,
TRANSPORTATION & LABOR
MEMBER
BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW
ENERGY, UTILITIES
& COMMUNICATIONS
GOVERNANCE & FINANCE
JUDICIARY
LABOR, PUBLIC
EMPLOYMENT & RETIREMENT

April 11, 2023

Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 450
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: LA's Garment Industry and the Downtown Los Angeles 2040 Community Plan

Dear Councilmembers,

I support the Garment Worker Center amendments for the DTLA 2040 Community Plan to preserve, protect and incentivize this essential industry. The garment industry in Los Angeles is the second largest manufacturing industry in Los Angeles and largest apparel producing hub in the United States, with a history in Downtown LA going back over 130 years.

In 2021, our coalition led by workers and ethical businesses passed my landmark bill, SB 62, to protect garment workers and create a sustainable garment industry. With over 150 business leaders in support—mostly minority-owned small and medium businesses—we accomplished historic levels of accountability and protected this job creating industry. We ended the race to the bottom. Now dignified fair wages and strong accountability will lead to better products and higher profits in our local economy, and to more companies opening shop in our Fashion District. It was a victory about workers and ethical businesses coming together to save their industry. We won because of the bravery of immigrant workers, business leaders, ethical investors, tireless advocates, organized coalitions, and hundreds of allies across the country. Land use planning efforts should not undermine our progress.

To ensure this historic new law is implemented, I have been prioritizing resources for workers, businesses and the Labor Commissioner to make a real impact. The DTLA 2040 Community Plan and the zoning and land use changes it currently proposes will impact thousands of garment industry businesses and their employees within the DTLA Fashion District, as well as the countless neighboring businesses and sectors that support and work with these businesses on a regular basis. This land use proposal is an important opportunity to redirect the systemic inequities garment workers face and engage this historically underrepresented population in the planning process.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my Legislative Director, Bethany Renfree Bethany.Renfree@sen.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Elena Durazo". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "M" and "D".

MARIA ELENA DURAZO
Senator, 26th Senate District