



MITCH O'FARRELL

COUNCILMEMBER, 13TH DISTRICT ★ CITY OF LOS ANGELES

September 21, 2022

The Hon. Monica Rodriguez
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: CF 22-0978

Dear Councilwoman Rodriguez and Colleagues on the Public Safety Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of CF 22-0978, which proposes a citywide Office of Unarmed Response and Safety to coordinate and streamline the various innovative approaches to public safety currently being piloted in various parts of the City, including CIRCLE (Crisis and Incident Response through Community-Led Engagement) and the Therapeutic Van Pilot Program. I was proud to co-introduce this motion with Councilwoman Rodriguez, Council President Martinez, Councilmembers de Leon, Blumenfield, and Price, with a second from Councilmember Raman. The strong partnership between so many of us indicates the importance and urgency of this issue.

In my district, we have already seen the positive impacts of the CIRCLE program in Hollywood. In the first four months since its initial launch in January 2022, CIRCLE diverted more than 500 calls related to homelessness and mental health away from armed police, and instead deployed trained service providers to respond with services and support. In that same time span, CIRCLE was responsible for more than 20,000 proactive positive engagements between service providers and people experiencing homelessness. Most of the practitioners have lived experience being homeless themselves, and with my office's help the program opened a decompression center that operates out of a City-owned facility near Hollywood Boulevard. The program has been so successful that, in this current fiscal year, the Council almost tripled its budget, and we are already getting it up and running in other parts of the City.

In addition to its compassionate approach and success in addressing homelessness and mental health issues, CIRCLE also allows the Los Angeles Police Department to focus on its core mission of crime prevention. Additionally, Chief Moore himself has publicly expressed support for the concept of a citywide Office of Unarmed Response and Safety.

Colleagues, I am confident in our collective ability to improve upon the public safety model in Los Angeles, and I appreciate your commitment to this issue. I ask for your swift passage of CF 22-0978.

With kind regards,

MITCH O'FARRELL
Council President Pro Tempore
Councilmember, 13th District