

Communication from Public

Name: Orlando Bohr

Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 09:18 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles City Counsel, Chairman and all representatives: This is to express my strong support in reference to your File Number 24-1600, regarding "The Los Angeles Fire Department Budget approval". It is extremely important to approve that Budget as presented, in consideration of the fact that as it stands; they're very short of resources already and it has become a matter of life and death. Please understand, denial of that budget will cause the existing resources to go into further depression, there will be more destruction of assets and human life., that will not be ok! Please "vote" in support to keep the CERT program alive within the LAFD, it has brought up multiple benefits to families who are empowered with training and knowledge to survive an emergency on their own to save the life of their love one... The Call Out Team are dedicated individuals who have extensive training and experience to support the Chiefs, Captains, Firefighters and the Communities at large when those Monster Fires strike and destroy Human Lives, Real and Personal properties. It will be ashamed and degrading for our worldwide famous City of Los Angeles to allow CERT program to cease to exist... I am Orlando Bohr with Call Out Credential #1002716, I have invested (7) seven years of my life helping Firefighters when situations go out of control., we collect plastic bottles to raise funds for "hydration and nutrition bars" to give the Firefighters when we're called to support them under extreme high temperatures. We have dedicated our lives to support LAFD without compensation... Please keep CERT in place!!

Communication from Public

Name: Sharon, Mid City West

Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 10:49 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: I would like the CERT Unit to continue operating with no less than 8 full-time Fire Fighter Instructors under the guidance and direction of the LAFD, where CERT was originally conceived. If Los Angeles cannot sustain a successful CERT Program and provide free disaster preparedness to its citizens, the optics and faith in our City will be diminished, just as Los Angeles steps onto the world stage for the NBA All-Star 2026, FIFA World Cup (2026), Super Bowl LXI (2027) and the 2028 Summer Olympics. Keep CERT in its entirety, and show the world that we are ready for anything. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 07:36 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached...

January 4, 2025

Re: BFC-117-LAFD CERT V-Hours Staffing Reductions

Dear Honorable Members of the Fire Commission,

First, Happy Blessed New Year to you and yours.

My name is Kathey Wilson, and I am a resident of Leimert Park and proud member of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) for more than a decade. Within the last ten years, my church, Trinity Baptist Church, which is in the Jefferson Park community, has hosted two of the seven-week CERT Training classes taught by the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) instructors. Both times, these classes were well attended by more than forty members of the community. I stress this because what CERT firefighter instructors have taught us are ways to help/support the community in the event of a disaster.

Please re-consider any cuts in the budget that would reduce the number of CERT Firefighter instructors. The more people they can train to be well prepared and help save lives would impact the surrounding communities profoundly.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.

Respectfully Yours,

Kathey Wilson

CERT 94, Norton 2

Communication from Public

Name: Pierre Landry
Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 07:37 PM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: See below

COMMENTS IN FAVOR OF CONTINUED CERT FUNDING

In 2014, two of my neighbors took the CERT training offered by LAFD. In the decade since, several others (including me) have taken the training, but more importantly, our group of neighbors have built on the information in the CERT training, attended other CERT trainings and drills, and organized a neighborhood emergency preparedness group that now includes 23 contiguous "blocks." We plan, develop, and give leadership to at least one drill a year, and host several smaller events, including a weekly radio net to practice and sharpen our emergency communication skills.

Over the years, we have been supported by and have collaborated with the Battalion 2 CERT Coordinator and other CERT volunteers. We feel that, WHEN the next emergency hits, like an earthquake or a wildfire, our neighborhood will be MUCH better prepared to deal with the situation when the usual emergency service personnel are swamped or unavailable.

I assume the issue is the value proposition — what's the bang for the buck? If there is value in protecting the lives and property of the residents of Los Angeles in a catastrophe, then financially supporting the CERT program is much more effective and less expensive than any other option. One way to reduce the cost is to allow volunteers to teach the CERT courses, with appropriate training and supervision, of course. Other options include online courses, or hybrid courses like the one offered by the University of Utah. Coping with the pandemic assembly restrictions has shown us that there are other workable models besides the traditional instructor-led classroom trainings.

In short, the City Council should be looking for ways to expand the CERT offerings, not reduce the opportunities to prepare the citizens for disasters.

Pierre Landry
President, Mount Washington Jessica Neighborhood, Inc.
landryph@aol.com

Communication from Public

Name: Brenda

Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 07:56 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Honorable City Council Members Are you able to guarantee that I will receive help from the City or the LAFD after an earthquake or large storm or fire? I do not count on that happening which is why it is valuable to me to participate in the CERT Program! At the least it gives me people to talk to after an emergency to get directions. At most, it could help save my life or the lives of others. Please do not reduce or defund the LA CERT Program. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Pierre Landry

Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 04:23 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: In 2014, two of my neighbors took the CERT training offered by LAFD. In the decade since, several others (including me) have taken the training, but more importantly, our group of neighbors have built on the information in the CERT training, attended other CERT trainings and drills, and organized a neighborhood emergency preparedness group that now includes 23 contiguous "blocks." We plan, develop, and give leadership to at least one drill a year, and host several smaller events, including a weekly radio net to practice and sharpen our emergency communication skills. Over the years, we have been supported by and have collaborated with the Battalion 2 CERT Coordinator and other CERT volunteers. We feel that, WHEN the next emergency hits, like an earthquake or a wildfire, our neighborhood will be MUCH better prepared to deal with the situation when the usual emergency service personnel are swamped or unavailable. I assume the issue is the value proposition — what's the bang for the buck? If there is value in protecting the lives and property of the residents of Los Angeles in a catastrophe, then financially supporting the CERT program is much more effective and less expensive than any other option. One way to reduce the cost is to allow volunteers to teach the CERT courses, with appropriate training and supervision, of course. Other options include online courses, or hybrid courses like the one offered by the University of Utah. Coping with the pandemic assembly restrictions has shown us that there are other workable models besides the traditional instructor-led classroom trainings. In short, the City Council should be looking for ways to expand the CERT offerings, not reduce the opportunities to prepare the citizens for disasters.

Communication from Public

Name: Jessica J Castanon
Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 11:32 AM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: See Below

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Director of Emergency Management at Loyola Marymount University (LMU), I am writing to express my strong support for the continuation of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program and its associated unit of eight dedicated Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) instructors. This program has been an invaluable asset to our university and the broader Los Angeles community for over a decade. Before returning to LMU in 2022, I had the privilege of working closely with the same LAFD CERT team to host training for the community. During this time, I witnessed firsthand their reliability, expertise, and exceptional ability to interact with and engage the community.

Their depth of knowledge, professionalism, and commitment to preparedness are unmatched, and they are exactly the kind of team we need to continue building resilience within our university and the surrounding community. At LMU, we have worked together with the CERT instructors to provide essential training that has significantly enhanced our campus's preparedness and resilience. Their courses, including fire extinguisher training, hands-only CPR, first aid, and incident command system (ICS) training, have directly contributed to a safer campus environment and a prepared public safety department. The program also offers earthquake preparedness education, which is critical for our region.

Since my return to LMU in 2022, the LAFD team has trained over 300 LMU community members in fire extinguisher training and more than 100 community members in general preparedness. This ongoing collaboration ensures that our university is not only prepared for emergencies but also actively contributes to the safety and well-being of those who live, work, and learn here. Hosting such training each year, particularly fire extinguisher and general preparedness courses, has proven to be of immense benefit to LMU by ensuring a more prepared and resilient campus community.

It is important to note that programs like CERT serve as a gateway for future leaders in emergency management, public safety, law enforcement, and first responders. I am a product of this program. As a first-generation Mexican American and the first in my family to graduate from college, I benefited from the CERT program, as well as the LAPD Cadet Program, the Police Orientation Preparation Program (POPP), all of which were free and played a significant role in shaping my career in emergency management. These programs provided me with the tools and knowledge to ensure that my campus is well-prepared and that others in my community can benefit as I have. I have personally referred colleagues, cadets, friends, and family to this program, and it has helped prepare them with the tools necessary to be ready in the face of emergencies.

In 2025, we plan to deepen our partnership by hosting CERT courses on campus, bringing this vital training to even more of our community members. To see this program possibly leave is deeply concerning. It has had a lasting impact on individuals, including myself, and has paved the way for many to enter careers in emergency management and public safety. The CERT program's free training not only saves lives but also provides a cost-effective solution for building community resilience. Replacing this program would result in significant financial and logistical challenges, as comparable services are often expensive and less accessible.

Communication from Public

Name: Jessica J Castanon
Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 11:33 AM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: See Below

Moreover, the fact that this program is offered at no charge means that LMU and the surrounding community benefit greatly, while also saving taxpayers money compared to outsourcing critical emergency training services. This partnership between LMU and the LAFD also fosters a strong collaboration with other local emergency management organizations, helping to build a network of preparedness that strengthens the entire city. It is a vital part of our community's emergency response ecosystem and ensures that we are all better prepared to respond to crises. The impact of the CERT program cannot be overstated.

These instructors have saved lives, improved disaster readiness, and fostered a stronger relationship between LMU and the LAFD. Without this program, we would face significant challenges, including the cost and logistics of finding alternative training providers—many of which may not be as accessible or effective as the current CERT offerings. The CERT program is vital to building a resilient community prepared for emergencies, particularly in a city as vulnerable to natural disasters as Los Angeles.

I urge you to ensure its continuation for the benefit of LMU, the surrounding community, and the city as a whole. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica J. Castañon

Director of Emergency Management Loyola Marymount University



Communication from Public

Name: Ronnie A Morales
Date Submitted: 01/06/2025 11:48 AM
Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training program has significantly enhanced community preparedness and resilience in the face of disasters. The CERT program was designed to equip ordinary citizens with the skills necessary to respond effectively during emergencies. Over the years, this training has proven invaluable in fostering a culture of readiness and self-reliance among residents. A primary benefit of the LAFD CERT training is that it empowers individuals to take action during emergencies. Participants learn skills such as fire suppression, basic first aid, search and rescue and disaster medical operations. These skills enable CERT members to provide critical assistance in the crucial moments following a disaster, often before professional responders can arrive. By equipping citizens with these capabilities, the CERT program ensures that communities are not entirely dependent on external help during emergencies. Discontinuing the LAFD CERT program would significantly undermine community preparedness and resilience. CERT training equips citizens with essential emergency response skills, fostering self-reliance and immediate action during disasters. Without this program, communities would be more dependent on professional responders, potentially delaying critical assistance. The loss of CERT would also weaken the collaborative networks that enhance neighborhood support and cohesion. Additionally, the absence of CERT-trained individuals would place a greater burden on emergency services, reducing overall efficiency. In essence, discontinuing CERT would leave communities more vulnerable and less capable of effectively managing emergencies. I know I have benefited greatly from my training from LAFD CERT from just taking the courses then continuing on to additional training and becoming part of a team that helps LAFD with firefighter hydration and working events like the Taste of Soul and the Hollywood Christmas Parade. My CERT training has been instrumental in meeting more of my neighbors and creating a network that can rely on each other when a disaster occurs.