

Communication from Public

Name: Marsha Saltman
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 05:03 PM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: Please see below:

To Whom It May Concern,

A couple of years ago, I had no idea how I could help my neighbors or community during an earthquake or other disaster. But after graduating from the CERT program, I now feel confident and empowered to take action when it matters most.

As a proud CERT graduate, I want to express my strong support for the continued success of the LAFD Community Emergency Response Team program. The CERT program is an invaluable resource, training volunteers like myself in vital emergency response skills and best practices for disasters like earthquakes. Because of CERT, I know how to stay safe, assist my neighbors, and contribute to my community in times of crisis.

CERT-trained volunteers play a crucial role in disaster response, helping to ease the burden on first responders. By being prepared, we're able to assist ourselves and those around us, allowing the LAFD to focus their efforts where they're most needed.

Thank you for supporting this essential program, which helps ensure that communities like mine are better prepared for any emergency.

Communication from Public

Name: Philip Jamtaas

Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 05:18 PM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: As I understand it, BFC 24-117 would eliminate or significantly reduce the number of LAFD Firefighters that teach CERT classes and support CERT Call-Out teams as well. This would be a great disservice to the residents of Los Angeles and would do little to solve LAFD budgetary difficulties. CERT members are trained to be more capable in caring for themselves, their families, and their neighbors during times when 1st responders are not available. This alone will lessen the burden on the existing LAFD staffing, saving dollars as well. In addition, some CERT members get additional training and join the CERT Call-Out team. These volunteers save countless LAFD Firefighter hours by providing hydration on fire incidents and relieving LAFD crews from lines down watch. They provide communications, basic first aid, and eyes on the ground during large events like the Taste of Soul and the Kingdom Day Parade. They also help set up and staff large staging areas and provide traffic control . They monitor cameras positioned all around the city during red flag days. And they staff outreach booths at hundreds of community events thereby spreading the word and inspiring more to take a CERT class. There's an ongoing process to all of this. New residents get CERT trained, some join the Call-Out team, and as time marches on, members age out. If training is stopped, or support pulled, CERT will eventually not be able to continue the cost benefits that they provide today. Firefighters will have to fill the void by replacing volunteers. During a city-wide emergency, the residents of Los Angeles will be far less ready or capable of surviving on their own without the CERT training currently available. Please find a way to keep our trainers and continue the CERT program as we know it today. Philip Jamtaas

Communication from Public

Name: Mark Presky
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 05:54 PM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: Please see below

To Whom It May Concern,

Please continue full funding for our local LA City CERT program. CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) was designed and begun by our very own LA City Fire Dept. After seeing, in 1986, how local residents tried to help their neighbors survive the 1986 Mexico City earthquake, and watching hundreds of volunteers suffer deaths in the process, The LAFD designed the CERT program. Now worldwide, our CERT is recognized as the premier army of trained volunteers to react when disaster strikes and regular first responders are overwhelmed. We need MORE CERT trainers, not fewer.

Finances are at the root of the current proposed cutbacks. Perhaps allowing and financing less expensive CERT leaders to train newbie CERT volunteers might be a feasible alternative. But in any case, our city needs more volunteers trained to help their neighbors, and cutting finances for trainers is foolish.

Communication from Public

Name: Georgia Brewer
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 08:54 AM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: Please see below . . .

To: Los Angeles Board of Fire Commissioners
Re: BFC 24-117 - LAFD CERT V-Hours Staffing Reductions

Dear Honorable Members of the Fire Commission;

I'm writing to respectfully request that you maintain full funding for the LAFD's Community Emergency Response Team.

Los Angeles is the birthplace of CERT, of which all Angelenos can be proud. This makes it especially inconceivable that the LAFD CERT program would be cut back or discontinued.

The LAFD CERT program has prepared tens of thousands of Angelenos like me to respond in the event of a disaster.

In addition to community training, the CERT Call-Out Team supports our firefighters and the community in countless other ways, including direct hydration support to firefighters, monitoring downed power lines until agencies can respond, helping LA City residents protect their homes with sandbagging support, and more.

I'm a CERT graduate who is grateful to the program for training, enabling and engaging community members like me to step up and SAFELY help out during disasters.

I took my CERT classes in 2019. The depth and breadth of the material, and the expertise of my firefighter instructor, went far beyond a basic preparatory class.

Thanks to CERT: I now have an emergency kit, emergency food and water, fire extinguishers and other essential supplies. I keep sturdy boots and PPE under my bed. I have taken First Aid (currently certified), and been trained in Stop the Bleed, Hands-Only CPR, use of Fire Extinguishers, Basic Search and Rescue, and how to lift people safely.

The program and its leadership not only have helped me prepare myself and my family for a major disaster, but was instrumental in bringing educational and other resources to my District 4 neighborhood (Sherman Oaks).

At the end of October, 2024, CERT sponsored an outdoor neighborhood earthquake drill in my Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Participants included existing CERT members honing their skills, but also community members - *my neighbors*. The following skills were reviewed/taught:

- How to set up a staging area
- How to identify threats to public safety
- How and when to respond (*and when it's too dangerous to respond*)

- How to organize response teams, including team-building best practices
- How to problem-solve situations we community members may encounter after a disaster.
- How to use walkie-talkies to communicate with team members (basic radio skills)
- How to document the situations we may encounter

Where else will Angelenos go to get this potentially life-saving training? We have a big city and the program needs sufficient staffing to be effective.

Please find a way to fully fund this valuable program that so richly benefits our community. *It brings our City so much more value than it costs.*

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Georgia Brewer
5518 Ventura Canyon Avenue
Sherman Oaks, CA 91401
818 439 3289

Communication from Public

Name: Georgina Brownell Huskey

Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 11:32 AM

Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: To the Honorable City Council Members. I am a CERT Certified individual, I have gone through the 7 week training, and I urge the City Council to find the necessary funds to keep the program going. In many ways, although not recognized as such we are ready to serve the City of LA Citizens in case of an Emergency until the recognized first responders respond. Those from the LAFD that trained us are should be an integral part of the LA City Emergency Preparedness - the program is essential to the EP plan for the City of LA. Without training, we would not be able to grow as a program. I realize the short staff and the difficulty recruiting, but I hope that funds can be found for this critical program. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: eric morgan
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 11:41 AM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: CERT - defense of LAFD Instructors - Public Comment to City Council

_____ My name is Eric Morgan, a newly hired Emergency Management Coordinator Level I for the City of LA Emergency Management Department. My being hired is the culmination of a years-long process of pivoting over from a 30 year plus career in the commercial maritime industry. During the tail-end of this career, I started to become cognizant of the need to give back to my community in which I have raised my children. The path began with figuring out how to translate my skillset into being of service to my neighbors. Taking and completing the CERT Training, with instruction provided by a professional Fire Fighter Paramedic, is instrumental for us neighbors “to be the help until the help gets there” were an adverse incident of significance to occur necessitating the immediate engagement of our first responders. So I am proof-positive of CERT members being a force multiplier! In my present role for the City, my work within the Community Partnerships & Engagement Division (CPED) is primarily forward-facing. A standing objective is to help our Angelenos to be better prepared for an emergency and/or disaster. Pointing residents towards CERT to kickstart their quest through the mechanism of CERT is a cornerstone of this messaging. The firefighter instructors and the reps from area public safety-oriented organizations (such as The Red Cross, Earthquake Country Alliance, as well as the EMD, for example) all find ourselves tabling/interacting at many of the same public events. The esprit de corps between us creates a collaborative environment, resulting in more meaningful engagement with the community, a far larger percentage of whom are far more cognizant of the ‘dynamic’ physical environment we live in. So for the benefit of the constituents we serve, let us at least make sure there are no stones left unturned in terms of seeking out funding sources which could alleviate the need to fracture an established institution such as CERT. For example, new legislative measures such as The recent Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 contains within it The Investing in Community Resilience Act of 2024. The new measure includes enhanced federal funding support for programs such as CERT, playing to its strength in developing human capital in the form of trained community volunteers as a ‘best bang for the buck’ for your investment in disaster preparedness. Thank you for your time. Yours in service, Eric A. Morgan

CERT - defense of LAFD Instructors - Public Comment to City Council

My name is Eric Morgan, a newly hired Emergency Management Coordinator Level I for the City of LA Emergency Management Department. My being hired is the culmination of a years-long process of pivoting over from a 30 year plus career in the commercial maritime industry. During the tail-end of this career, I started to become cognizant of the need to give back to my community in which I have raised my children. The path began with figuring out how to translate my skillset into being of service to my neighbors. Taking and completing the CERT Training, with instruction provided by a professional Fire Fighter Paramedic, is instrumental for us neighbors *“to be the help until the help gets there”* were an adverse incident of significance to occur necessitating the immediate engagement of our first responders.

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Thank you for your time.

Yours in service,

Eric A. Morgan

eric.a.morgan@lacity.org

(213) 259-4323

Communication from Public

Name: Jessica J Castanon
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 12:07 PM
Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: 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. 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. 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: Jessica J Castanon
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 12:21 PM
Council File No: 24-1600

Comments for Public Posting: 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. 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



CHARLES VON LAY BUILDING

Admission



Loyola Marymount University
Public Safety

Communication from Public

Name: Joseph Pannone
Date Submitted: 12/31/2024 02:21 PM
Council File No: 24-1600
Comments for Public Posting: Please see below

Joseph W. Pannone
6001 Boeing Place
Westchester, CA 90045-2938
tuttibuon@sbcglobal.net
310.491.6041
December 31, 2024

Re CERT Support

Honorable Mayor and Council Memembers:

Happy New Year!

I have been a certified CERT member since February 2024. It has been a great experience learning how to help my community in times of crisis. You need to be sure the upcoming budget provides sufficient and even expanded support so that important public activity can continue to provide safety assistance to our community and first responders.

Please do the right thing and provide that much needed financial assistance!

Very truly yours.

Joseph W. Pannone