

Communication from Public

Name: Josie Tong

Date Submitted: 10/08/2026 08:53 PM

Council File No: 25-1428-S1

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council, I am writing as a Pacific Palisades resident who experienced the Palisades Fire to ask the City Council to preserve or strengthen the Zone 0 protections adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. There are times when government establishes reasonable safety rules because one person's choices can create risks for other people. We require seat belts even though people once argued that wearing one should be a matter of personal choice. We restrict smoking in certain places because secondhand smoke affects other people. We have building and fire codes because the way one property is constructed and maintained can affect neighboring properties. Wildfire resilience requires the same understanding of shared responsibility. In an ordinary neighborhood, what I plant in my yard may seem like nobody's concern but mine. In a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, that is not always true. Combustible materials immediately adjacent to my home can contribute to its ignition. If my home ignites, it can become a source of radiant heat, flames, and embers threatening the homes around me. The same is true of my neighbors' properties. The Palisades Fire showed us that our homes do not face wildfire risk in isolation. We face it together. That means we have responsibilities to one another. Zone 0 does place limitations on what homeowners can put immediately next to their structures. But that five-foot area is small compared with the potential consequences when a home ignites and fire spreads through a neighborhood. The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection developed its Zone 0 regulations after extensive expert input, stakeholder participation, and public comment. Those regulations are already less protective than the fully noncombustible five-foot zone recommended by the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS). Los Angeles should be free to adopt more stringent Zone 0 requirements that provide greater wildfire protection. But the City should not introduce alternative compliance approaches that have not been scientifically demonstrated to be equally effective and that could, in practice, leave neighboring homes at greater risk. Individual freedom matters, but so does the responsibility not to create an unreasonable and preventable hazard for the family living next door. Those of us who live in wildfire-prone communities need to

accept that responsibility to each other. I am willing to invest in protecting my home and those of my neighbors. I hope that my neighbors will do the same to protect mine and others' as well. The economic impact of the Palisades Fire was devastating and will take years for the City to recover. For the sake of our city, please preserve the State Board's Zone 0 protections and consider strengthening them where the science supports doing so. Do not substitute untested alternatives that may reduce the protection our neighborhoods need. Help us rebuild Pacific Palisades as a safer and more resilient community. Respectfully, Name: Josie Tong
Neighborhood: Pacific Palisades Signature: Josie Tong Date:
October 8, 2026

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 10/08/2026 09:11 PM

Council File No: 25-1428-S1

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council, I am a Pacific Palisades resident who lived through the Palisades Fire and witnessed firsthand the devastation wildfire can bring to a community. For me, this is not an abstract debate about regulations or landscaping. It is about protecting the homes, families, neighbors, and community that have defined Pacific Palisades for generations. I watched the fire approach. I evacuated in fear as evacuation routes became overwhelmed and traffic came to a standstill. I did not know whether I would escape safely, whether my home would survive, or whether my family, friends, neighbors, and their pets would make it out. Members of our community lost their lives. Many residents lost their homes and everything they had built over a lifetime. Entire neighborhoods were destroyed, forever changing the place I call home. Pacific Palisades will rebuild, but it will never be the same. Some residents have been forced to leave and may never return. Others face the painful decision of whether and how to rebuild. Homes can be reconstructed, but the relationships, memories, and shared history that made this community special cannot simply be replaced. The Palisades Fire taught me that wildfire resilience is not simply about protecting structures. It is about protecting the people, families, and connections that make a community home. Since the fire, I have also learned much more about how embers can travel ahead of flames, ignite vulnerable materials, and contribute to the spread of fire from one structure to another. Choices made before a fire begins can significantly affect whether homes and neighborhoods survive. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Los Angeles City Council to preserve or strengthen the Zone 0 protections adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, rather than pursue alternative approaches that could weaken wildfire safety protections for our homes and communities. The State Board recognized that the area immediately surrounding a home is critical to reducing ignition risk. Its Zone 0 regulations were developed through an extensive public process involving expert input, stakeholder engagement, and public comment. The Board considered the difficult choices involved in establishing protections intended to reduce ember ignition risk and protect lives, homes, and communities. I also recognize that the State Board's Zone 0 regulations are less

protective than the noncombustible Zone 0 standard developed by the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), which recommends that the first five feet around a structure be entirely noncombustible. The City of Berkeley has adopted this more protective approach as part of its wildfire mitigation requirements. I understand that wildfire protection requires difficult choices. I cherish the gardens and landscaping that make Pacific Palisades unique, but after experiencing this devastation, I recognize the importance of making changes that protect my home and my neighbors. Making the first five feet around my home noncombustible is a small sacrifice compared with what I am trying to protect: my family, my neighbors, my home, and my community's future. It is a sacrifice I am willing to make to reduce the risk of another catastrophic loss. I respectfully ask the City Council to maintain or strengthen the State Board's Zone 0 requirements. Please do not substitute alternative approaches that may, in practice, provide less wildfire protection. The decisions made today will help determine whether future families face the same devastation. Respectfully, Nancy Sussman