

April 24, 2013
Honorable Councilmembers

Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Approval of Implementation Plan for Exclusive Waste Franchises (C.F. 10-1797-S15)

Dear Councilmembers,

I write you to emphatically support the LA City Bureau of Sanitation's Implementation Plan for the commercial and multi-family exclusive waste and recycling franchise system. A diverse coalition, lead in part by Sierra Club, NRDC, and Coalition for Clean Air, strongly supports this bold and thorough plan for a transformed waste and recycling system.

The current system is broken: too much waste is going to landfills, our streets are choked with too many diesel-spewing trucks, and there's scant accountability to the City's ambitious Zero Waste goals. Our landfills are reaching capacity while too many renters and businesses can't recycle – leading to the development of costly "alternatives" like transporting our waste by rail to the desert, or waste-to-energy. Low-road haulers skirt environmental standards with no accountability. Inefficient, overlapping truck routes pollute our air and destroy our streets. We are throwing too much away: recyclables, good green jobs, and clean air.

The Bureau's plan will make Los Angeles an environmental leader in this industry, dramatically increasing recycling, executing landmark organic waste pilot programs, ensuring rigorous clean truck standards and reductions in vehicle miles travelled, and holding companies accountable with stringent environmental standards.

The eleven zones proposed by the Bureau also strike the right balance of accountability, asset management, and high-road competition. All parties agree that extensive investments in processing, remanufacturing and reuse infrastructure are necessary to meet our ambitious goals. The Bureau's proposal will promote these investments by protecting the value of the service zones, making it easier for companies to get the financing necessary for infrastructure investments, and increasing efficiencies and economies of scale. Any increase in the number of service zones will undermine this very critical element to reaching our environmental goals, as well as making it nearly impossible for the Bureau to hold companies accountable.

Last week, your colleagues on the Energy and Environment Committee and Ad Hoc Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee approved this plan in a 4-0 vote. We urge you to continue that progress towards a new system and approve this plan, leading the way from an outdated system to a national model for zero waste, clean air, and good green jobs.

We need dramatic change, and we need it now.

Thank you,

Hank Chilton