

Amy Howden-Chapman
2042 North Alvarado st
Los Angeles 90039
October 18, 2012

Los Angeles City Council Members
Submitted via email

Dear Councilmembers,

I am a resident of Council District X, a renter and someone who cares about the environment. The waste and recycling system serving LA's apartments and businesses is broken: too much waste is going to landfills, our streets are choked with too many diesel-spewing trucks, and there's little accountability to the City's Zero Waste goals. Our landfills are reaching capacity while too many people like me can't recycle where they live and work – 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 and worker safety standards. Inefficient, overlapping truck routes pollute our air and destroy our streets. We are throwing too much away: recyclables, good green jobs, and clean air.

This system is broken, and an exclusive franchise system is the solution.

Exclusive waste franchises are tested. In fact, 61 cities in LA County, 31 cities in Orange County, San Francisco (leading the nation with 80% recycling), San Jose, Oakland and Seattle all have exclusive franchise systems. Exclusive franchises are the best path for ensuring maximum diversion and recycling, and the best tool to help cities limit the impacts of commercial waste vehicles, which get an average of 3 mpg and are the most damaging commercial vehicles on city streets. An exclusive franchise is the only system that allows cities to partner with haulers and hold them responsible for achieving the goals and standards they say they will achieve.

A diverse coalition, lead in part by NRDC, Sierra Club and Coalition for Clean Air, strongly supports the plan by the LA City Bureau of Sanitation and approved by the Board of Public Works calling for an exclusive franchise for LA's commercial and multifamily waste system. This industry is too important – and the implications too far-reaching – for the city to adopt half-measures. We need dramatic change, and we need it now.

As a biker, compositor, and passionate environmentalist who believes we must reduce carbon emissions, in all aspect of our city life especially though transport and waste reduction, I strongly support this proposal and urge you to vote for these recommendations when they come before you.

Thank you,

Amy Howden-Chapman