

Dear President Wesson and City Council members,

The waste and recycling system serving the city of Los Angeles' apartments and businesses is broken: too much waste is going to landfills, diesel-spewing trucks run overlapping routes, and there is scant accountability to the city's ambitious recycling goals. Our landfills are reaching capacity while too many renters and businesses can't recycle -- leading to the development of costly "alternatives" such as transporting our waste to the desert.

We are throwing too much away: recyclables, good green jobs and clean air. An exclusive franchise system with strong environmental standards is the solution for greater accountability.

Exclusive waste franchises have proved successful. Many cities in Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland and Seattle use exclusive franchise systems. This type of system is the best path for the city of Los Angeles to ensure maximum recycling and limit the damage caused by commercial waste vehicles on city streets. An exclusive franchise system is more effective in keeping haulers responsible for achieving goals and standards.

A diverse coalition, including the Coalition for Clean Air, the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council, strongly supports the plan by the Los Angeles City Bureau of Sanitation for an exclusive franchise system for Los Angeles' commercial and multi-family waste system. The Board of Public Works unanimously approved this plan. I strongly support the proposal and urge you to approve these recommendations when they come before you.

The implications for this are too far-reaching for the city to adopt half-measures. We need rational and comprehensive change, and we need it now.

Sincerely,
Andre Christian