

The WILTERN

July 14, 2015

Council President Herb Wesson
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 430
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Council President Wesson:

The Wiltern Theatre is an historic building that provides visitors the perfect vibe for a variety of events. The 2,300 capacity performing arts center offers guests the opportunity to enjoy concerts, shows and other live performances. Live Nation manages the theatre, and entertainment comes second only to the safety of guests.

We are writing today in response to the city's plans to legalize sidewalk vending. We would like to raise specific concerns with regard to vending in the vicinity of event venues, and the need to ensure that any legislation prohibits sidewalk vending in the area surrounding a venue. Quite simply, it is unsafe to allow any type of vendor to set up on the sidewalk when hundreds or thousands of individuals are entering and exiting a building in a short period of time.

City sidewalks were not built with the purpose of housing pushcarts or stationary vendors selling food and merchandise. They are pedestrian walkways, of which there is barely enough capacity for people to utilize to safely enter and exit an event space.

In the city's attempts to create a legalized structure, it is also imperative to include effective enforcement. Lack of enforcement has contributed to the proliferation of unlicensed sidewalk vending that we currently experience and puts pedestrians in danger. A few examples of dangers posed by sidewalk vending around event spaces includes:

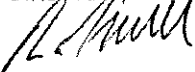
- Jay walking and disobeying traffic signs
- Burns from propane grills on crowded sidewalks
- Blocking public rights of way

We have had to dedicate our private resources and safety officers to manage unlicensed vending, and hope that any new legislation creates a program that is self-funded, as well as includes an adequate number of inspectors and officers to enforce the law.

Austin, Texas is one example of a city sidewalk-vending program that prohibits vending around its convention center, entertainment venues and other areas that draw large crowds,¹ and could be used as an example for Los Angeles.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to further discuss these concerns, and others, as they relate to sidewalk vending around the Wiltern. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rick Merrill
General Manager

¹ City of Austin, Sidewalk Vendors. <http://austintexas.gov/department/sidewalk-vendors> (July 13, 2015)