

December 9, 2014
Honorable City Council
c/o: Office of the City Clerk
Attn: Richard Williams and Felipe Chavez
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012.

RE: Support for proposed Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones, Los Angeles City Council File #14-1378

Honorable City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the creation of an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone for the City of Los Angeles per City Council Motion #14-1378 introduced by Councilmember Felipe Fuentes (CD7) and Curren Price Jr. (CD9), and seconded by Jose Huizar (CD14). I also request that you work with the County Board of Supervisors to create similar zones in the unincorporated areas of the county.

I greatly support urban food growing as a key strategy for making Los Angeles a “Good Food” city for everyone—where food is healthy, affordable, sustainable and fair. Urban agriculture benefits the community and environment by providing green space, connecting and revitalizing neighborhoods and providing a source for free, nutritious food, which is especially important in neighborhoods with limited healthy food options. Local food growing also offsets the environmental impact of shipping food long distances, and helps retain and clean water runoff. It also creates a more sustainable city and County in cases of severe emergency when ports or freeways prevent deliveries. We are too dependent on central valley and other counties for our local food supply.

The creation of an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone (UAIZ) for the City of Los Angeles, in conjunction with California Assembly Bill 551, will help transform vacant and blighted parcels into vibrant urban farms and community gardens by providing a property tax benefit to property owners who lease their land to a food growing operation. This can reduce the impact of blight and illegal dumping on communities and spur local economic development, while also expanding access to nutritious and affordable food and providing land security to urban agriculture projects. We encourage the City to design the UAIZ program in a way that benefits and prioritizes low-income communities in greatest need.

We encourage City Council to expeditiously implement the Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone for the City of Los Angeles, and work with the County of Los Angeles on providing the property tax benefit for eligible projects.

Sincerely,



Adrienne Ferree

Cc:

Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo
Councilmember Paul Krekorian
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember Tom LaBonge
Councilmember Paul Koretz
Councilmember Nury Martinez
Councilmember Felipe Fuentes
Councilmember Bernard Parks
Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr.
Councilmember Herb J. Wesson, Jr.
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Councilmember Mitchell Englander
Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell
Councilmember Jose Huizar
Councilmember Joe Buscaino