



Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Fwd: City Council File #14-1635-S2

1 message

Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>
To: Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Mon, Feb 1, 2016 at 7:25 AM

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Sharon Dickinson, Legislative Assistant
Planning and Land Use Management Committee
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From: **Miss Matilda's Bakery** <missmatildasbakery@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun, Jan 31, 2016 at 8:52 AM
Subject: City Council File #14-1635-S2
To: councilmember.krekorian@lacity.org
Cc: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, sharon.gin@lacity.org

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

My name is Don Broydes and I reside in Valley Village.

Pursuant to The Cottage Food Act (AB 1616), I own and operate Miss Matilda's Bakery, which is a home baking business, enabling me to sell baked goods that I produce from scratch at local farmers markets and within the County of Los Angeles, either retail or wholesale. Currently, I am a vendor at the North Hollywood Farmers Market on Saturdays, and the Toluca Lake Farmers Market on Sundays.

I have been serving Los Angeles in this business endeavor since 2014, and I would like to share with you my experiences of the past several years, as they haven't been easy, to say the least.

I'm sure you're aware of the economic downturn that took place, starting in 2007, and as a result has not recovered to comparable levels, such as those of 20 years ago when I was in my mid 20s.

I owned Matilda's Cafe, LLC, in Encino from 2007 to 2008, and that business failed, due to the economic downturn. We were located in an office building complex at 6345 Balboa Boulevard, #180, and many tenants from the building complex also experienced a downturn in their businesses, especially those who worked in finance. As a result, the buildings lost tenancy, causing my own business to decrease by more than 90%, and eventually I sold the business, though, experienced a loss of close to \$80,000. Of course, there was no bailout

for me, despite others who received bailouts, but on the tab of the taxpayers.

Despite having a B.A. in Child Development, with more than 3 years of experience with working with the autistic population in special education, as well as in probation, I have not been able to find a job for many years in my field. In addition, having had years of restaurant experience, I have also not been able to find a job for many years in the restaurant business, too. With a resume stating that I have been self-employed for so many years, employers tend to question why I am looking for work, whether as a manager, as 1:1 aide, or as a busboy. How awkward it appears when a person with higher education seeks such work, especially as one who manages and operates their own business. At least for them it seems to be awkward, as I've been asked many times, if I ever get to the interview stage, as it rarely happens. For me, the point is to obtain work and make a living. To live the American Dream, if there is anything left of it, as it's surely a much different United States, in comparison to when my parents arrived here more than 50 years ago.

Therefore, as a result of the aforementioned, I would like to let you know that I am self-employed out of necessity. It remains challenging, but nonetheless, I enjoy it, and I continue to strive for success, or at minimum, to make a living, as there is no choice.

I would like to apprise you of the fact that airbnb and other home sharing websites, have brought customers to my booths in both North Hollywood and Toluca Lake with the farmers markets there, as usually farmers markets are not just an in and out stop for patrons, but rather, people would like to get to know the businesses much of the time, and their products being sold, as many like to support local businesses. Much of the time with patrons, we get to discussing things and I ask them how they like the market, and I'm frequently told that it's their first time there, as they're staying nearby through airbnb, for example, and their hosts let them know that there is a farmers market nearby. Indeed, such guests of hosts through airbnb have benefitted from my business, and I, as well as other vendors, have benefitted from their patronage. In such difficult economic times, when costs of goods continue to increase, rental prices and just the general costs of living and tourism as well, all merchants need as much business that can come their way.

Your website states, "Krekorian has worked to implement changes to the city's policies that will make it easier to do business in Los Angeles, create good jobs and boost the city's vital economic sectors."

As a citizen, local resident and business owner, I must thank you for this and I would like to ask you to continue to support home sharing options here in Los Angeles, as competition is in fact a good thing. The more businesses that the city has, the more chance for revenue there will be for business owners. In addition, the more chance for job creation, and of course, the more chance for revenue for local, state, and federal levels. My prices are lesser than Starbucks or Panera nearby, and our biscotti, which is my mother's recipe, is our specialty, and very much enjoyed by many. I believe that it's good to give people a choice of where to shop. In addition, it's good to give people a choice where to stay if they're in town for tourism or business. Hotels and motels are always an option, of course. We've all stayed in them, but personally, I found out about airbnb in 2013 and my first use of it was as a guest in West Virginia, in a small town, which had no motels. I was happy to discover how airbnb worked and that I could rent a whole apartment for much less than an average motel would charge in a town 20 miles away, for example, as the town that I wanted to visit had a wonderful waterfall that I wanted to enjoy seeing, while on the way to other parts of West Virginia, eventually going back to Virginia. In addition, in 2014 and 2015, I've stayed in homes and rented an entire apartment in French Polynesia, thanks to airbnb. French Polynesia is a very expensive destination, even more than visiting New York City.

Thanks to airbnb, I found places to stay and I was able to experience some time with families and see how Tahitians live on a few various islands. Moreover, I've visited Boston and stayed out of town a bit, near a Metro station in a home, which I found on airbnb, and also far out of town, also where motels were not in abundance, and much more affordable. In addition, I've stayed in New Jersey, simply across the Hudson River from New York City, and saved so much money being able to stay there, as you're probably aware that the minimum to stay in a decent hotel in New York City is usually at least \$200, and it just goes up from there, as the sky is the limit. In Hawaii, it was wonderful, as I was able to stay out of touristy areas and in actual homes with locals. During all the aforementioned stays at these various destinations, I was always offered handbooks or local periodicals, which were full of attractions, from the airbnb hosts, which were full of advice, and in many homes where I stayed, they were not in touristy areas, so surely, small business benefitted from my visiting such areas. Likewise, not everybody can afford to stay in a hotel or motel in many places, Los Angeles included. Airbnb is in fact helping many families travel to our city with so much to offer, enabling them to stay with families of local people, which provides much education to tourists as to how we locals live, work and play, as many, including myself, would prefer to stay in homes, as opposed to a hotel, and airbnb makes this possible.

I ask that you allow airbnb to operate freely, just as my business is permitted to operate freely, in this city of ours. Competition is a good thing. It gives people a choice and it will provide more business to local merchants, giving people a chance to make a living and generating revenue for businesses, for themselves and their own livelihood, their employees, and tax revenue as well.

Sincerely,

Don Broydes

Miss Matilda's Bakery