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April 20, 2017

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street,
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Council file 15-0499 (Protecting Biodiversity)

Dear Honorable Councilmembers:

Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) is a non-profit environmental advocacy organization concerned with the well-being of wildlife and wildlife open space habitat for the City of Los Angeles and beyond. A citizenry of more 3000 individuals now support our organization's multiple calls for biodiverse practices and policies that benefit LA City, County, California and the globe. We work to protect wildlife and their habitats in perpetuity through restoration and/or preservation of species and habitat connectivity as we implement ongoing education programs that emphasize the importance of wildlife as a measure of the health of our environment.

We have a great deal of respect for the wealth of earth science and wildlife biology in this vast region and are proud to serve as part of the foundation of the Biodiversity Protection Working Group. As environmental advocates, CLAW spends quite a bit of time coordinating information from the various scientists and research experts as we cull the information into practical applications that aid in the education of laymen and provide tools to measure existing policies as we recommend improvements. As our global environment is succumbing to the deleterious side effects from ever increasing populations and urbanization we have reached a tipping point in our need to implement local permanent protections to quell the effects of climate change, decrease of natural resources and habitat loss that directly affect species across flora and fauna.

As part of the California Floristic Province, one of only 33 biodiversity hotspots in the entire world, the City of Los Angeles has a vitally important responsibility to protect what we have. To be named a biodiversity hotspot, an area must contain species and plant life that cannot be found anywhere else. Locally, Los Angeles has resolved to be sustainable by 2050 and its citizens increasingly demand to coordinate environmental policies with the long-term health of Los Angeles residents and their environment to ultimately protect our unique environment.

We applaud the leadership of Councilmembers Paul Koretz, Bob Blumenfield, Mike Bonin and Jose Huizar to create a Biodiversity Index under which the disparate policies that affect the health of our biodiversity fall. By passing this motion we create a flow of information among academia, advocates, LA City departments and policy makers to ultimately understand the intricacies of our precious and unique environment and therefore measure its policies ultimate environmental outcome. Furthermore, this motion opens pathways for new discovery, information exchange and ultimately creates a deeper understanding between scientists, citizens and policy makers.

Sincerely,

Alison Simard, Tony Tucci, and Shawn Silver – Directors, Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife

CLAW is a public benefit non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental organization that works to protect and restore the environments of wildlife of Los Angeles and California from dwindling open spaces. Our mission is to promote, educate and protect the fundamental importance of wildlife, wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors everywhere.