



March 15, 2019

Chair, Planning and Land Use Management Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Opposition to the Restaurant Beverage Program Ordinance (Council File #17-0981)

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson:

This letter is to make known that Alcohol Justice is in formal opposition to Councilmember Krekorian's "Restaurant Beverage Program" (Council File #17-0981), which proposes to expedite the granting of Conditional Use Beverage Permits to on-sale restaurants that meet a set of pre-determined operating standards.

The Restaurant Beverage Program (RBP) Ordinance as it now stands is entirely inadequate for the following reasons:

- The Ordinance does not include *any* alcohol-specific conditions that would institute crucial public health and safety protections. There is every reason to anticipate a flood of new applications as a result of a dramatically expedited process and reduction in fees. With no restrictions on happy hours, minimum drink requirements, and drink specials, our neighborhoods will suffer from additional alcohol-related problems, including drunk driving, injuries, crime, fighting and public nuisance activity.
- The Ordinance provides no opportunity for public input. Community members, Neighborhood Councils and other entities, including LAPD itself, will merely be notified of the new alcohol businesses that will be opening – even in already dense, overly-concentrated areas – without being afforded any opportunity to have a voice about what alcohol businesses are opening and how they operate.
- The Ordinance does not mandate adequate enforcement, designating only two City-initiated inspections over the entire lifetime of the permit. That means all new alcohol businesses with an expedited CUB will be operating with no accountability, no inspections, and no consequences for the lifetime of their permits after the first two inspections are complete.
- The Ordinance does not articulate a streamlined revocation process in the event operators violate the conditions of their permit.

Los Angeles already has a large number of businesses that sell alcohol. Any new land use policies that make drastic changes to the permitting process must include substantial provisions that protect public health and safety. As it currently stands, the RBP Ordinance is only good for businesses. It must also be good for communities. For these reasons, Alcohol Justice asks you to oppose it.

Sincerely,

Jorge Castillo
Advocacy Director