

May 2, 2018

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

RE: 17-0117 support of Alcohol Restricted Use Subdistrict / Conditional Use Permits

Dear Councilmember Huizar,

We want to express appreciation for your leadership and success in addressing the overconcentration of health-harming land use in Los Angeles, and for the City Council's efforts at the local and state levels to advance effective regulation of alcohol outlets. As proponents of community environments that support physical and mental health for all people, Prevention Institute recognizes that the overconcentration of alcohol outlets continues to be undeniably harmful to portions of Los Angeles in the form of violence, unintentional injury, addiction, trauma, crime and non-defensible space. Currently there is a motion (CF 17-0117) instructing the City Planning department, in consultation with the City Attorney, to prepare a report on the feasibility of Alcohol Restricted Use Subdistricts (ARUS), which could address these neighborhood-level impacts by restricting the overconcentration of alcohol retailers. We urge the PLUM committee to prioritize this motion and schedule a hearing to consider these findings.

Prevention Institute is a national non-profit organization (with offices in Leimert Park Village) that is dedicated to achieving health, equity and safety for all and addressing the upstream conditions that support community-level wellbeing. Through our work on multiple public health issues, Prevention Institute has consistently framed alcohol outlet density as a determinant of health and a driver of trends in domestic violence, sexual violence, youth violence, child maltreatment, suicide and traffic injury. A large body of evidence supports this and further demonstrates that alcohol-focused land use policy, e.g. zoning practices and conditional use permits, can help ameliorate the inequitable concentrations of alcohol outlets that continue to produce inequities within the built environment particularly impacting low-income African American and Latino communities. Density limitations on alcohol outlets are a common-sense policy response to address the community-level health risk posed by overconcentration. Research on alcohol concentration in urban areas has shown that a 3% reduction in retail locations can double the reduction in violent crime exposure. Conversely, one additional alcohol outlet can cause a 2% increase in violent crime.

Prevention Institute is supportive of the potential outcomes associated with the ARUS proposal: allowing stakeholders and decision-makers to identify areas within City Council districts where restrictions are needed on the allowable number of local permits for off-sale or on-sale alcohol establishments in a specific geographic area while encouraging the establishment of healthier retail options.

Thank you once again for your work on progressive, health promoting land use policy initiatives. Prevention Institute has contributed much analysis to discussions connecting resource environments and community health strategies, and stands ready to help shape and uplift land use innovation to support health in Los Angeles. We urge you to schedule a hearing on the ARUS motion.

Sincerely,



Manal J. Aboelata, MPH
Managing Director, Prevention Institute



Elva Yañez
Director of Health Equity, Prevention Institute

CC:

Councilmember Herb Wesson, PLUM committee
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, PLUM committee
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, PLUM committee
Councilmember Mitch Englander, PLUM committee