



Class: Not Charity

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June 9, 2017

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

Re: Support for Motion for Land Use and Legal Analysis of Setback Around Oil and Gas Extraction in Los Angeles (Council File # 17-0447)

Dear Council President Wesson and Los Angeles City Council:

The Liberty Hill Foundation has been very concerned with the problem of neighborhood oil drilling since we first became aware of the issue several years ago. Based upon reports from some of our grantee organizations, and other nonprofits and community-based groups working throughout the City of Los Angeles, we conducted our own research and outreach, leading to the publication of our Fall 2015 report, *DRILLING DOWN: The Community Consequences of Expanded Oil Development in Los Angeles*, which can be found on our website.

DRILLING DOWN provides a profile of the geographic distribution and demographic characteristics of oil and gas facilities in Los Angeles, as well as personal stories of residents in South Los Angeles and the Harbor area who suffer from severe health impacts as well as neighborhood nuisances from these industrial operations. With research and analysis conducted by Professors James Sadd and Bhavna Shamasunder of Occidental College, the report documents how a high proportion of active oil wells are within close proximity to Angelenos' homes and schools. It also demonstrates that many of the neighborhoods that host oil/gas drilling facilities are also overburdened with disproportionate exposure to toxic air emissions from industry and transportation corridors. In other words, many of these are "environmental justice" communities that experience high rates of both pollution and poverty, with high proportions of African-American and Latino residents.

We are heartened to see the April 19, 2017 motion, introduced by Council President Wesson and supported by Councilmembers Bonin, Cedillo, Harris-Dawson, Koretz, and Martinez (Council File #17-0447) directing the City Attorney, Petroleum Administrator and Department of City Planning to perform a legal and land use analysis of a distance setback, or buffer zone, between oil/gas development facilities and sensitive land uses. We are in strong support of this motion.

We further support the need for an ordinance that would establish such a distance setback and provide for the discontinuance of any facilities that fall inside of such a buffer. There is a growing body of scientific literature that supports the need to separate oil and gas facilities from people, and that supports the fact that distance matters. There is mounting scientific evidence that a distance buffer of 2,500 feet will help to reduce health impacts and provide the greatest protection for nearby residents.

Oil drilling operations do not belong in residential neighborhoods, or near schools, health care facilities or parks. While oil drilling has been commonplace in the Los Angeles landscape for decades, the emerging science on the health risks and hazards along with growing population density, indicate that it is time to end this practice.

We encourage the Council to continue to demonstrate its leadership on policies that protect the health and well-being of all Angelinos, and which place Los Angeles in the forefront of environmental, energy and climate policy

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Prichard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Michele Prichard
Director, Common Agenda Program
Liberty Hill Foundation