



City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Tour bus Ordinance CF 17-1115

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 7:28 AM

Please attach to Council file 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gwen Slaughter** <Gwen.Slaughter@starlinetours.com>
Date: Tue, Sep 24, 2019 at 4:36 PM
Subject: Tour bus Ordinance CF 17-1115
To: Mike.bonin@lacity.org <Mike.bonin@lacity.org>, paul.koretz@lacity.org <paul.koretz@lacity.org>, nury.martinez@lacity.org <nury.martinez@lacity.org>, john.white@lacity.org <john.white@lacity.org>, David Ryu <david.ryu@lacity.org>, Nicholas Greif <nicholas.greif@lacity.org>, Brian Gallagher <brian.gallagher@lacity.org>
Cc: Kami Farhadi <Kami.Farhadi@starlinetours.com>, Vahid Sapir <Vahid@tourcoach.com>

September 24, 2019

The Honorable Mike Bonin.

Chair of the Transportation Committee

City of Los Angeles

200 N. Spring St.

[Los Angeles, CA 90012](#)

Dear Councilmember Bonin and Members of the Transportation Committee;

In reference to the Tour Bus Ordinance CF 17-1115

Tourism in the City of Los Angeles is an integral part of the makeup and as an important revenue stream for the city. It also allows tour companies to showcase Los Angeles to its many visitors from around the globe. We are very cognizant of the impact these services may have on the residents and general public.

We at Starline Tours of Hollywood are supportive of regulations to enforce safety on the streets of Los Angeles. Safety of the passengers aboard our tour buses and the general public is of utmost concern to us. We want to be a part of the solution and not the problem. There are, however, small procedural concerns we have as to one specific section within the ordinance.

We believe that once you hear our explanation of this one issue, you will agree with our position.

Specifically, we strongly believe that tour operators should be responsible for repeat violations for individual drivers, independent from all other drivers, and not the entire staff of that operator's employee drivers collectively. The operator must be responsible for every individual driver they employ.

We believe that the amendment added to LAMC Section 80.36.11 making the operator solely responsible for violations by the driver does not adequately address the problem issues and achieve the goals as set out by the City.

In order to properly address and achieve these goals, we believe that the driver should not be absolved from his or her duties as a commercial bus, driver within the law, which is the safe and careful operation of the vehicle. Without the backing of the law, it allows drivers to circumvent the law without responsibility.

We believe that it is in the best interest of the City to revise this amendment to make the driver and operator responsible for violations. We believe the operator should be solely responsible only when multiple violations by the same driver occurs and there is no action on the part of the operator to correct and eliminated. The driver also needs to be responsible for violations by having a record of these violations on his or her driving record. This dual responsibility will prevent drivers from moving from one operator to another if they choose to leave.

This revision will also help to ensure that the safe and law abiding drivers remain on the road and continue to provide a great service to visitors to the City of Los Angeles via tourism, which is an integral component to Los Angeles.

Making an operator solely responsible for the actions of a driver after having discussions with the driver and training the driver, as well as putting strict disciplinary procedures into place, is giving a free pass to a qualified commercial driver to misbehave. As written, this law requires the owner of a sightseeing company to be responsible for all violations for all drivers collectively, as they should be, within the company, which could lead to criminal offenses and penalties.

Finally, we realize that we are coming in the 11th hour on this matter. It was mentioned in a letter to the Council that a meeting was held with residents of HHWNC on April 17, 2019, from 7am to 9am, of which tour bus operators were invited as well as two subsequent meetings. However, probably unintentionally, Starline Tours was never notified. We would have liked to have been a part of these discussions early on and are now asking for reconsideration on the amendment referenced above. We want to ensure we can help achieve the objectives that the City is aiming for.

Respectively submitted,

Gwen Slaughter
General Manager Starline Tours

6801 Hollywood Blvd – Suite 305, Hollywood, CA 90028

Main Line: (323) 785 6700 Direct Line: (323) 785 6376 Cell: (310) 508 8102

E-mail: Gwen.Slaughter@starlinetours.com Website: www.starlinetours.com Live Feed: <http://starlinetours.com/hollywoodLive>



Angeles.

Starline Tours is certified as a Green Business by the City of LA Green Business. This recognition signifies that we are conducting our business using strategies aimed at improving employee wellness and productivity, energy savings, water efficiency, resource stewardship and reducing CO2 emissions. This seal shows our commitment to incorporating sustainable practices at every level of our operations as we continue striving to reduce our impact on the environment through sustainable practices and source reduction initiatives. We take pride in being part of the growing green business community of Los

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John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072



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27K



City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: STAR TRACK TOURS STATEMENT on Item #13 CF 17-1115

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 11:26 AM

please attach the email below to CF 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Adena R. Tessler** <atessler@mercuryllc.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 11:03 AM
Subject: STAR TRACK TOURS STATEMENT on Item #13 CF 17-1115
To: john.white@lacity.org <john.white@lacity.org>
Cc: Adena R. Tessler <atessler@mercuryllc.com>

Hello John,

Please see add letter from Tour Bus Operator to Council file for Item #13.

Thanks
Adena

Subject: STAR TRACK TOURS STATEMENT

September 25, 2019
Star Track Tours
[6735 Hollywood blvd](#)
LA, CA 90069

Dear Committee Councilmembers:

I am the owner of Star Track Tours in Hollywood and an Ambassador with the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce. I'm very concerned about the proposed tour legislation you are considering. I fear it will hurt my business and negatively impact the tourism experience for millions of visitors to Los Angeles.

A little about my company. Star Track Tours is just over five years old. In that short time we've built one of the best star tours in Hollywood featuring the newest and most high tech tour vehicles. We have about 10 employees who are all members of this community. Over the past five years we have safely provided first class star tours to hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the United States and throughout the world. We are a force of good in Hollywood and have top ratings on sites like Trip Advisor.

In an effort to plan for the new rules and regulations over the past two years I've personally spent \$200,000 buying and enhancing three new 15-seat tour vehicles. These state of the art vans have had no structural modifications or changes made to their roofs as explicitly explained in the new state law. However, what we did do, which is greatly wanted by tourists, is we simply removed the side windows to provide fresh air and a great view for pictures. This is how TMZ and Starline do many of their vehicles as well.

Under the new state law this is perfectly legal. Under Beverly Hills law this is perfectly legal. But under the new Los Angeles law it apparently is *illegal* because of a one sentence addition added to the bill. In my opinion this is incredibly inappropriate and unfair to the efforts we have made to do the right thing.

It also means my company could be seriously affected by your plan to restrict road use. Now our tour covers three major areas: the Hollywood hills, Beverly Hills & Rodeo Drive and the Sunset Strip. This makes for an exciting star tour of the area that tourists are demanding. One of their biggest requests is to see the

Hollywood Sign which we show while driving along Mulholland Drive. The views from Mulholland Drive day or evening are spectacular and are a major reason our tour is such a great success.

My company makes every effort to avoid smaller roads and neighborhoods in the Hollywood Hills. We generally stick to Mulholland Drive which takes us to other access roads like Laurel Canyon and Coldwater Canyon and then on to Beverly Hills. We are very concerned if your plan includes restricting these major access roads which we have found to be perfectly drivable in all weather conditions and which we have never had any safety issues whatsoever!

Finally, if you do approve major road restrictions in the area it will only make traffic and noise problems worse for the residents. You will have more visitors taking their own vehicles into the Hollywood Hills generating more vehicular traffic and creating a less safe environment. The current tour van system is not perfect but working within it to make some changes will be a lot better for the city and homeowners than opening up this potential Pandoras Box. I hope you will give our concerns serious thought.

Sincerely,

Jeff Napshin
CEO, Star Track Tours
(202) 321-0250

.....
Mercury.

Adena R. Tessler

Vice President

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John A. White

Legislative Assistant

Transportation Committee

Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee

(213) 978-1072





City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Open bus tours

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 12:06 PM

please attach the email below to Council File 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Hollywood Tour** <tourhollywood@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 11:33 AM
Subject: Open bus tours
To: <John.white@lacity.org>

Dear Sir,

My company's name is Open Bus Tours. We are a five stars company on Google, and Trip advisor with a several hundred reviews, we have been in the tour business for more than twenty years, and we have between seven to ten employees that rely on the tour business.

Please do not make a public street private, due to a few rich and powerful residents in the neighborhood. We are here to be part of a solution.

Thank you,
Houssine Lazaar
3234490376

OpenBusTours.com

--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072





City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Hollywood Star City Tours

1 message

John White <john.white@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 12:07 PM

please attach the email below to Council File 17-1115 as a communication from the public

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Thomas Touhill** <ttouhill@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 25, 2019 at 11:38 AM
Subject: Hollywood Star City Tours
To: <john.white@lacity.org>

Dear Sir,

Before making a decision today on the future of tour companies in Los Angeles, please consider the hard working employees of this industry.

Thank you,

Thomas Touhill
Hollywood Star City Tours

Sent from my iPhone

--
John A. White
Legislative Assistant
Transportation Committee
Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee
(213) 978-1072

