

Somper Furs

From: Somper Furs <somperfurs@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, February 4, 2019 11:17 AM
To: 'paul.koretz@lacity.org'; 'councilmember.wesson@lacity.org'
Cc: 'edw.johnson@lacity.org'; 'Billie Green'
Subject: Council file:18-0538 Ordinance to ban fur in the city

Date: 2/6/19
Submitted in: PRW Committee
Council File No: 18-0538
Item No.: 10
Deputy: William P. Liu

Dear Councilmember Koretz , and Council President Wesson,

I am writing to you in advance of the Animal Welfare and Committee meeting scheduled for this Wednesday to finalize the file mentioned above. I would greatly appreciate your support in what are my requests for a compromise. I hereby formerly request the committee and council to consider that while I am in strong protest of this ordinance passing, I am left with possibly, no choice but to request that those of us that are currently and have been, in our case actively in the business of exclusively fur products, be allowed to continue such activities until such time that we voluntarily decide to close our operations. You may consider it a "grandfather" clause, and if the council feels adamant to move forward with this ban, then simply do not issue any new business licenses for those wishing to start in this business, while humanely allowing those very few of us who have invested ourselves in this business the freedom to continue as our companies have for the past 69 years. I strongly believe that if you feel you must pass this Ordinance and declare a victory, there would be no reasonable opinion that this compromised position is not fair and just in it's demand.

Sometimes change is good, as in the example of Govenor Brown before his term ended enacted in his carbon free energy law. He has allowed for this change to be in effect by 2045. This is an example of allowing time for people and businesses to adjust and plan. This change he has defined by law, does appropriately meet the rationale of protecting the citizens health and safety. However in alliance with our state of California's Constitution, I fail to see any adequate rationale to how a ban on the sale and production of fur products even remotely is in aid of protecting our city's citizens health and safety! Which seems to categorize this ordinance as both arbitrary and capricious in it's making. Furthermore, the amount of time this ordinance currently and consistently has allowed for us to remove ourselves from our business activities, being 24 months, is in fact totally inadequate. When you have been in business for 69 years, in a business that is highly seasonal, those 24 months boil down to approximately 6 months, November and December of 2019 and Jan., Feb., March, as well as Nov. and Dec. of 2020. We must also notify the thousands of customers who have had their coats in storage with us for decades, we must try and find new jobs for ourselves and employees who are highly skilled in an ancient craft industry, and in our particular case, try to sell our commercial building in your re-development district in a down trending market by most accounts. So at the very, very least I formerly request this phasing out period to be appropriately extended to a 15 year period, in which we may continue to operate just as we have done so.

We have written and invited the members of council to contact us, ask questions, visit us at our businesses, so we may show all of you, how wrong this ordinance is and how it has been founded on very inaccurate information. I have unfortunately had not one response to this date. I have had the privilege of speaking to many of the councilmembers directly or their staffs, however I have had zero response from your office Mr. Koretz. I would appreciate perhaps in fairness, if you would at this time allow us to meet or speak with you directly, and the members of your committee, in order to achieve the goal of fair democracy and of at least educating you on the exact nature of our businesses. I find it highly suspect that an ordinance that puts a great burden on the community, ourselves, our employees and the many trickle down businesses that we all support, has not at least done the due diligence that democracy should demand of hearing our side of this proposed ban on our constitutional rights.

If this ordinance comes to pass without compromise or considerations mentioned above, I hereby put you in notice that I will challenge this ordinance to the fullest extent of the law. In order for an ordinance to be a law, it cannot be arbitrary and capricious. In fact, the law of California provides legal remedies for challenging Ordinances which are not supported by fact or law, but rather, the limited interest of few individuals. The law of California provides the process of referendum and initiative to those individuals who desire to have laws enacted by popular vote. Here, the proposed

ordinance is not supported by any appreciable public interest or concern. Rather, the Ordinance seeks to invade the private contract rights of individuals in the City of Los Angeles who enjoy fur products or make a business from fur products and wish to continue use. There is nothing inherently bad associated with the fur industry in the city of Los Angeles, or any other place in the civilized world. Indeed the fur industry is an international business, strictly monitored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior and by the California Fish and Game. The fur industry does not in fact force or coerce anyone to buy or wear fur, we do not bully and harass anyone and respect the individual rights of those who choose not to. In Los Angeles the fur industry has historically and substantially been entrenched in society. One of the oldest precepts of jurisprudence is the law which respects the right of persons to enter into contract of their desires. There are literally thousands of contracts made and entered into in the City of Los Angeles every day. If this Ordinance passes the millions in our community will have no source to clean, maintain, preserve or alter their owned furs, or heritage furs that have been handed down from one generation to the next, as we cannot afford to stay in business for these services, which at this location are generally done at a no profit basis.

The right to contract is one of those fundamental rights in our society that is frequently lauded and rightly receives primary credit for the establishment of a functional, market-based economy in which predictability is prized.

I will hope to hear from you before the meeting on Wednesday, and if you are unable to do so, perhaps you can reschedule your committee meeting until which time we can discuss this issue further.

Sincerely and Respectfully Yours,

Donna Pappas, Owner
Somper Furs
2270 West Washington Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90018
Phone (323) 373-0500

Somper Furs

From: Somper Furs <somperfurs@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, February 4, 2019 11:33 AM
To: 'stephanie.uy@lacity.org'
Subject: Council file: 18-0538
Attachments: 20190204113004368.tif; 20190204113018638.tif

Dear Ms. Uy,

I have spoken to you in the past under Mr. Englander, who had been assisting me on this issue. I was able to get to speak with him at length when he called me, and now as he is no longer in his position and Mr. Smith has replaced him in general and in his seat on the Animal Welfare and Personnel Committee, I have written to Mr. Smith as soon as the item referred to above was scheduled by Mr. Koretz, last Friday. It is my urgent request that Mr. Smith get to read this email, as he and I have not had any chance to speak **on this** issue. I would be so very appreciative if you could please read or mention to him the issues I have with this **ordinance**.

Very Sincerely,

Donna Pappas
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Phone (323) 373-0500

Somper Furs

From: Somper Furs <somperfurs@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 8:22 PM
To: 'councilmember.price@lacity.org'
Subject: COUNCIL FILE:18-0538

Dear Councilmember Price,

I would like to propose to you a compromise regarding the Fur Ban Ordinance, and we would be very grateful for your consideration. Would it be palatable, to consider amending this ordinance to allow those of us currently doing business to continue to do so, in a grandfathering clause? Your committee could choose not to allow any new and future businesses permits to conduct fur business in Los Angeles. I believe this could achieve Los Angeles citizens maintaining their rights of choice, provide to them the ability to be able to service their owned and heritage furs, many of which have great sentimental value having been passed down from one generation to the next. Manufacturing and Servicing furs is a craft, what we have been doing in Los Angeles since 1950, is a specialized trade learned through apprenticeship, that non-furriers cannot provide. So, if you do not allow us to thrive and do business, we will no longer be able to afford to offer the public the services such as; cleaning, altering, repairing and storing our communities furs, and there will be nobody who can. There are without exaggeration hundreds of thousands of fur owners, wearers and buyers in Los Angeles, what will they do? We offer these services routinely to many of these citizens for free! I think that among the people requesting a ban who are reasonable and respectful of others rights, may be satisfied as well that they have been heard. Sometimes change needs to be slowed so people can adjust. Anytime an entire industry is challenged, sufficient time is needed for adjustment and time to find alternatives. Governor Brown offered this to all the carbon based energy industry, probably to an extent beyond what is needed. However to give all of us less than 24 months I believe is hardly enough time and should be perhaps 10 years. And I would like to request this amendment to the ordinance as well. In San Francisco, they offered something similar and then took it away by saying they could not buy any new inventory, In our industry, our inventory is expensive and only available at certain times of the year and the turnover is very fast, so if it is given with goodwill intended, this stipulation if added would put us out of business in 1-3 months.

My husband, Michael Pappas, Sole Proprietor of Michael's Furs is one of the largest exporters of fur in America. He brings in millions of dollars of foreign trade every year, which doesn't hurt the trade deficit. He has been working in this trade since the age of 17 and is world renown for his craft and provides the furs for many of the branded labels worldwide. He has crafted furs for 50 years now for the movie, television and music industries who are very important to the city of Los Angeles and having their specific needs met here at home, is better than them taking their productions elsewhere.

At Somper Furs, we also service the movie, television and music industries by loaning out costumes, again offering this for free. We support many museums and fashion schools in preserving their assets, we donate to scores of local charities and fulfill the needs of our own citizens. We work with many local designers, one of which you are very familiar with and stylists and fashion photographers. I sit on the board for the Black Design Collective, which has just been established to promote awareness of the talents of our black artists and artisans. We all including our employees are involved in many activities that assist students from the fashion schools, animation departments of studios, homeless shelters in Los Angeles and try everyday to do more and be better at servicing the community.

We saved for many years in order to purchase our own commercial building to operate our businesses in a redevelopment area of Los Angeles located in Mr. Wesson's district. We have been in this building for the past 13 years. We and our employees support the local area businesses and restaurants daily and we bring into the area thousands of Beverly Hills, Pasadena, Orange County and foreign customers, who also have been referred by us to other local restaurants and businesses. We also live in Los Angeles and own our home here, in Mr. Ryu's district, whom we voted for. We have been 4 generations of democrats voting from our hearts and we sincerely hope you can propose this grandfather clause into your Animal Welfare and Personnel committee meeting. Our employees and their families, my husband and I and our daughter, who works in our business and the hundreds of thousands who do business with us would be very grateful if you will consider proposing this on our behalf.

We are available to you, and any other member of the committee to visit us, see what and how we do our business and answer any questions any of you may have.

Sincerely Yours,

Donna Pappas

Somper Furs

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Los Angeles, CA 90018

Phone (323)373-0500