

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at NCsupport@lacity.org.

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Mid City WEST Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(20) Nay(0) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 10/10/2019

Type of NC Board Action: Against

Impact Information

Date: 12/03/2019

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 19-0602-S1

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: At our regularly scheduled monthly full board meeting of October 10th, 2019, the Mid City West Community Council Board of Directors voted unanimously to OPPOSE CF# 19-0602-S1. We are AGAINST CF-19-0602-S1.



MID CITY WEST COMMUNITY COUNCIL

543 N. Fairfax Avenue, Suite 106
Los Angeles, California 90036
Telephone (323) 285-3540
www.midcitywest.org

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2019-2021

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December 3, 2019

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**Honorable City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

To City Council Homelessness & Poverty Committee:

We, the Mid City West Community Council OPPOSE adopting Council File Number 19-0602-S1, a proposed amendment to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 41.18 Sidewalks, Pedestrian Subways--Loitering. Mid City West Community Council is an official Los Angeles neighborhood council serving the following neighborhoods: Beverly Grove, Burton Way, Carthay Circle, Fairfax Village, La Brea, Melrose Village, Miracle Mile and Park La Brea.

Homelessness has reached epidemic proportions in Los Angeles according to the most recent results of the Homeless Point in Time Count report (from LAHSA) showing that 58,936 of our fellow Angelenos are experiencing homelessness. Although many strategies (e.g. Measure H and Prop HHH) have been implemented on the state, city and county level, this issue is multi-faceted and complex and requires an even greater comprehensive approach to tackle these issues. Building off existing, effective strategies that we have already invested in, it is important that we come together as a community to identify long term solutions to help our community members. We are one paycheck away from experiencing homelessness ourselves as we saw a staggering increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The proposed amendment to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 41.18 is a short sighted response that could potentially create more problems rather than provide a solution. The Municipal Code currently states that a person cannot sleep within 10 feet of doorways, entrances, exits, driveways and loading docks, and that until a minimum amount of housing (shelter, bridge housing and permanent supportive

PURPOSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS: *“To promote more citizen participation in government and make government and make government more responsive to local needs...”*

City of Los Angeles Charter Section 900



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housing) is built, individuals can sleep on the sidewalks from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. The existing code was already controversial given the lack of options for our homeless neighbors living on the street. Sadly, the proposed modifications make the ordinance completely draconian, and would essentially criminalize being homeless.

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell has been a leader in tackling homelessness issues in Los Angeles and over the past several years, he has worked closely with advocates and other community partners to find solutions. The new proposal from Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell shares a common goal of getting unhoused individuals off the streets but unfortunately, it could also have negative consequences. The proposal would place a ban on locations where individuals are allowed to sit, lie, and sleep, including areas within 500 feet of schools, parks and daycare facilities; facilities that opened after Jan. 1, 2018 that offer housing, shelter and services to individuals experiencing homelessness; bicycle paths; any tunnel, bridge or pedestrian subway that is on a city designated school route; certain public spaces with posted "no trespassing" signs, and "crowded public sidewalk areas". Some of the language is considerably vague and would therefore be subject to interpretation. Unintended consequences of this proposal could result in the following: costly amount of resources to enforce this rule, growing public health concerns because of the restrictions from parks and other public spaces that provide accessible restrooms, and barrier to services because our current system connects people to services based on location. This proposal also has the potential for creating even larger encampment areas because individuals would gather in areas where camping was permitted magnifying the issues listed above.

In addition, the amendment included language stating that individuals cannot engage in "aggressive behavior" such as approaching, following, or speaking in a way that makes them fear bodily harm or damage to or loss of property, and intimidation into giving money or other valuable items. The language is again, subject to interpretation and would place those unhoused in an unfair advantage by allowing housed individuals to initiate action against individuals experiencing homelessness. We believe this proposal would criminalize homelessness and perpetuate systemic, racial injustice[EM1]. According to LAHSA's Homeless Count report, black people in Los Angeles continue to be 4 times more likely to experience homelessness. Los Angeles prides itself on being welcoming and progressive. Following through with this proposed amendment outlined in Council File 19-0602-S1 would be taking steps in

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the opposite direction. As a community, we need to continue working on long term solutions that include supporting existing resources and adding necessary services, instead of criminalizing those experiencing homelessness.

Sincerely,

Scott Epstein
Board Chair
Mid City West Community Council

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