

MOTION

Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970, one year after the catastrophic Santa Barbara oil spill along the Pacific Coast. It is an annual event serving as a call to action across the world for public engagement and governmental policy to restore the earth's environment. Today, April 22, 2020 marks its 50-year anniversary.

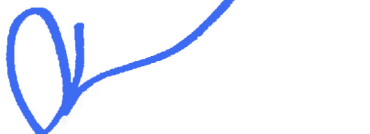
With the City and the entire state of California under stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19, there has been a drastic and positive change to the air quality across the Los Angeles region due largely in part to a reduction of 80% of vehicular traffic. According to IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company that monitors pollution levels in cities around the globe, the City recently saw some of the cleanest air of any major city in the world. Data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has also shown that during March, Los Angeles experienced the longest stretch of "good" air quality since at least 1995.

A recent study from Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health performed an analysis of 3,080 counties in the United States and found that COVID-19 patients in areas that had high levels of air pollution before the pandemic are more likely to die from the infection than patients in parts of the country with cleaner air due to higher levels of tiny dangerous particles in the air known as PM 2.5. Such findings put several historically underserved communities around the City at risk, such as the East side of Los Angeles and neighborhoods that also experience limited access to green spaces.

To continue to minimize pollution and improve the air quality around the City after the pandemic eases, initiatives must be taken to ensure that once the emergency order is lifted, these positive environmental impacts can continue. Over the years, states such as Alabama and Oklahoma have used different forms of incentives to increase the number of telecommuters in their states. Some governments, including the City of Los Angeles, offer adjusted schedules to minimize the number of days City workers are required to commute to work, and promote vanpool programs to reduce traffic and carbon emissions. Reducing commuter traffic across the City more broadly has the potential to impact the environment everywhere in positive ways.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst and the City Administrative Officer in conjunction with the Economic and Workforce Development Department, the Office of Finance, and any other necessary departments be instructed to report on incentives the City can offer to businesses who continue to allow their

APR 22 2020



employees to telecommute a certain percentage of their work schedule after the emergency order is lifted.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst and City Administrative Officer in conjunction with LADOT, StreetsLA, and any necessary departments be instructed to report back on initiatives to mitigate the effects of motorized carbon emissions known to cause asthma, heart disease, and cancer; reduce gridlock; evaluate traffic movement patterns; and enhance urban greening efforts that make our air cleaner and the general public healthier.

PRESENTED BY: 
MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL