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September 3, 2008

Los Angeles City Councilmember Tom LaBonge  
Chair, Arts, Parks, Health and Aging Committee  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Councilmember LaBonge,

Today, the City's Arts, Parks, Health and Aging Committee is discussing the City Attorney's Ordinance to restrict smoking in the City's Farmer's Markets. I would like to express my full support in favor of strengthening our anti-smoking ordinances and thereby reducing the spread of illnesses caused by secondhand smoke. It is our obligation to ensure that the many families who attend Farmer's Markets enjoy a safe and healthy environment.

Secondhand smoke kills approximately 38,000 non-smokers each year. Secondhand smoke exposure causes an estimated 300,000 children under the age of 18 months to suffer lower respiratory tract infections, including bronchitis and pneumonia. Secondhand smoke exacerbates child asthma and increases the risk of acute, chronic and middle-ear infections in children. The Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke at a group A carcinogen, the most dangerous class of carcinogens.

It is our duty to protect public health by limiting the exposure of our residents, particularly the children, to the dangers of secondhand smoke. I am proud to acknowledge the great strides our City has made to regulate smoking in public places. We have successfully restricted smoking in restaurants, on beaches, in offices and playgrounds. As a representative of the Second Council District, as a concerned resident of Los Angeles, and as a mother, I am honored to be supporting our efforts to restrict smoking in Farmer's Markets. But we can and must do more.

I look forward to continuing our work with the Committee, the organizations presenting at today's meeting, and the entire City family to protect the health of our City.

Sincerely,

Wendy Greuel  
President Pro Tem, Los Angeles City Council  
Councilmember, 2nd District

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CHAIR: TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
VICE CHAIR: BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE  
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