

November 22, 2014

via email to the following:

Honorable Councilman Huizar
Los Angeles City Council
District 14
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 465
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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Honorable Councilman Price
Los Angeles City Council
District 9
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 420
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmembers Huizar and Price:

As a Downtown LA Resident, I would like to share with you my concerns regarding a potential effort to legalize street vending. I live in the South Park neighborhood which, as you know, includes the Staples Center, LA Live and the LA Convention Center. Our BID Clean & Safe Team deals with illegal street vending on a daily basis – taking up valuable resources paid for by legitimate, licensed, brick & mortar business and property owners.

In the process of enforcing current ordinances & laws, the illegal vendors either finished with their vending for the day or evading the BID Safe Team or LAPD, dump their unsold foodstuffs in our streets, sidewalks and alley ways inviting bugs, vermin and causing generally unsightly conditions overall. The BID is not funded to provide this type of service for illegal businesses but do so in order to keep our neighborhood clean and safe.

Having recently completed the 11-week LAPD Central Division Citizens Academy, I have learned from LAPD Officers that focus on these illegal street vendors, that more often than not, money the vendors make is (1) supporting gang activities or (2) the vendors are working as indentured servants to pay their 'coyotes' – payment of which may never be made in full. These entities can surely afford to pay to 'license' their businesses but, legal or not, this is not about 'business' but is about exploiting human beings for profit.

Legalizing street vendors also poses the problem of enforcement of the laws that go along with obtaining a license. We are all well aware the City of LA does not currently have sufficient Staff to monitor licensed businesses. From food trucks to parking lots. How will the City of LA manage to monitor & enforce additional 'licensed' businesses when they can't keep up with the current numbers?

In the end, it really just seems like a way for the City to increase their coffers, while not providing any 'service after the sale' to ensure that these businesses are **compliant** with all the rules and regulations required of a legitimate, licensed brick & mortar business.

I hope you will include and consider these important issues in the discussion of the legalization of street vending. Thank you.

Dawn Davis
Resident South Park, Downtown LA