

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: June 26, 2018

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso  Council File No: 18-0002-S38
Chief Legislative Analyst Assignment No.: 18-03-0274

SUBJECT: Resolution (Krekorian - Martinez) to SUPPORT AB 2450 (Quirk)

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (Krekorian – Martinez) to include in the City’s 2017-2018 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 2450 (Quirk) which would require manufacturers of balloons constructed of electrically conductive material, and filled with a gas lighter than air, to permanently mark each balloon with a printed statement that warns consumers about the risks if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line.

SUMMARY:

Resolution (Krekorian – Martinez), introduced on March 28, 2018, states that electricity outages caused by metallic balloons are increasing every year in California. The Resolution notes that these outages not only cause great inconvenience and revenue losses to businesses, but also pose a public safety risk.

Recently, a metallic balloon came in contact with a power line, causing a flaring event at a local refinery that severely injured four workers.

The Resolution indicates that current law makes it a crime for a person to sell or distribute a balloon that is constructed of electrically conductive material without a statement affixed to the balloon that warns the consumer about risks if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line.

The City’s Department of Water and Power (DWP) continues to experience increasing annual outages caused by metallic balloons.

The Resolution states that AB 2450 (Quirk) will require manufacturers of balloons constructed of electrically conductive material, and filled with a gas lighter than air, to permanently mark each balloon with a printed statement that warns consumers about the risks if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line. Therefore, the Resolution requests that the City support AB 2450.

BACKGROUND:

According to the measure’s author, “the loss of electricity means a halt and disruption to almost every kind of activity we engage in every day. Business operations and manufacturing can be halted, traffic signals and street lights can stop working, lights and computers at home can turn off and can even be damaged. Metallic balloons cause thousands of power outages a year and represent a significant portion of preventable power outages.”

The author notes that the metallic balloons are made of electrically conductive material, and can cause significant damage to power lines and equipment when they come into close proximity to power lines – potentially causing an electric arc. A resulting fire can cause significant damage to electrical infrastructure including property in close proximity.

The State’s Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) linked two fires in 2013 and 2015 to metallic balloons. These fires burned over 10,000 acres, and cost millions of dollars to suppress. AB 2450 would serve to warn consumers of the dangers of metallic balloons and would encourage their proper use and disposal.

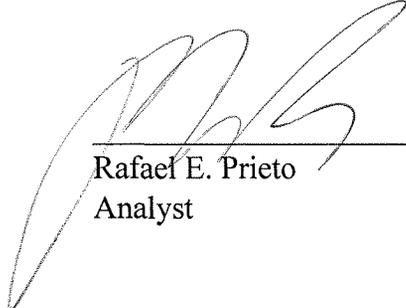
DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED:

Department of Water and Power

BILL STATUS:

6/19/18

Approved by the Senate Business, Professions and
Economic Development Committee



Rafael E. Prieto
Analyst

Attachment(s): 1. Resolution (Krekorian – Martinez)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal government body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, electricity outages caused by metallic balloons are increasing every year in California; and

WHEREAS, outages not only cause great inconvenience to individuals and revenue loss to businesses, but also risks to public safety; and

WHEREAS, in Southern California, a metallic balloon came in contact with a power line, causing a flaring event at a local refinery that severely injured four workers; and

WHEREAS, current law makes it a crime for a person to sell or distribute a balloon that is constructed of electrically conductive material and filled with a gas lighter than air, without a statement affixed to the balloon that warns the consumer about the risk if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power continues to experience a trend of increasing annual outages caused by metallic balloons; and

WHEREAS, AB 2450 (Quirk) will require a person who manufactures a balloon that is constructed of electrically conductive material and filled with a gas lighter than air to permanently mark each balloon with a printed statement that warns the consumer about the risk if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that by adoption of this Resolution, with the concurrence of the Mayor, the City of Los Angeles hereby, in its 2017-2018 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 2450 (Quirk), which will require manufacturers of balloons constructed of electrically conductive material and filled with a gas lighter than air to permanently mark each balloon with a printed statement that warns the consumer about the risk if the balloon comes in contact with an electrical power line.

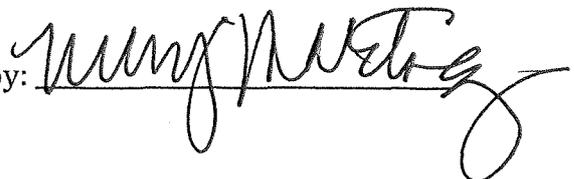
Presented by:



PAUL KREKORIAN

Councilmember, 2nd District

Seconded by:



MAR 28 2018