



**Los Angeles**  
Urban League

*Empowering communities.  
Changing lives.*

September 12, 2017

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Council member, Third District  
City Hall  
200 N. Spring St. #415  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield,

The Los Angeles Urban League is proud to stand with the coalition of community groups, labor unions, and small businesses encouraging the Los Angeles City Council and other elected officials to enact safer, more sustainable standards for low-rise building developments throughout our city.

The National Urban League was created as a response to discriminatory laws that limited black Americans in every aspect of their lives, from housing to employment to health and sanitation. Our vision was equality of access for all Americans to these opportunities, and it is a fight we continue today. In Los Angeles, a city that is constantly growing and innovating, housing is a central issue for various vulnerable groups. New regulations, such as those suggested by the Build with Strength campaign, protect the diverse communities living and working throughout our city and provide broad and long-term benefits to the many collaborative interests involved.

Safer building standards impact all communities, yet low and moderate-income residents and small and medium-sized businesses most often occupy mixed-use low-rise developments, and are thus most affected by these policies. What's more, the safety measures of the Build with Strength effort do not only apply to residents, but also impact workers involved in the development, management and emergency response programs. Requiring the safest and most reliable processes in the construction of multi-family housing is essential for the security, health, and economic future of our city.

Los Angeles is facing a housing crisis amidst a projected population boom. This is a challenge for local policymakers, but it is also an opportunity to model socially and environmentally-conscious development. We hope that new developments will meet or exceed existing building codes, and especially that the City of Los Angeles will encourage the use of non-combustible materials. Fires and earthquakes are a major risk, and only compounded by the city's density, emphasizing the need to focus on safety for the future.

We urge Councilmember Blumenfield and his fellow council members to support the Build with Strength campaign to improve building and fire safety regulations in Los Angeles. Sustainable development is as much about people as it is about infrastructure, and the City Council has a chance to invest in true sustainable development by ensuring safe, affordable places to live and work.

Sincerely,

Nolan V. Rollins  
President and CEO  
Los Angeles Urban League

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