



A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

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Build With Strength Calls on Los Angeles City Council to Take Action After Veterans Housing Project Fire

Blaze takes down new development just months before completion

Los Angeles, CA — A fire recently destroyed another apartment complex under construction in Los Angeles. The project was meant for low-income families and veterans and was a partnership between the East L.A. Community Corporation and New Directions for Veterans. The blaze damaged nearby structures and displaced several community members as well. Roughly 150 firefighters were called to extinguish the blaze.

The project was designed to contain 61 apartments, including 31 for veterans, 28 for other low-income families and two for resident managers. It would also have housed agencies that could help people with their taxes, obtaining health care, and other services. Leonardo Cuadrado, Executive Director for New Directions for Veterans indicated that they would eventually rebuild the project.

Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation's building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing, highlights the need for legislation or local measures to address this devastating problem. The coalition is proud to support the "Building A Safer Los Angeles" motion that currently sits before the Los Angeles City Council, sponsored by City Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Monica Rodriguez.

The motion would greatly increase the safety of similar multifamily housing by requiring the use of noncombustible materials during construction. While it was approved unanimously by City Council's Planning and Land Use Committee in December of last year, the motion currently awaits a hearing in the Public Safety Committee.

"As someone who has invested a significant portion of their life to veterans housing, the news of the East Los Angeles project is truly devastating," said Michael McDowell, a Build with Strength coalition member and President/CEO of the Valor Club USA. "I've worked on several projects in the Los Angeles community and understand just how important it is for those that have served and have found themselves in a tough situation. The Los Angeles City Council has an opportunity to ensure that

something like this doesn't happen again. Low income and veterans housing should be built safely and affordably with non-combustible materials.”

Build with Strength works with communities, lawmakers, and industry employees to advocate for safer, sustainable building materials. Strengthening local and national building codes is among the organization's top priorities.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com

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