



3.4.2020

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

[Klawlor@buildwithstrength.com](mailto:Klawlor@buildwithstrength.com)

202-253-6401

## Los Angeles City Council Moves to Ensure Safer Buildings

*Unanimous 5-0 vote in Public Safety Committee moves "Building a Safer Los Angeles" the fire life safety motion forward*

**Los Angeles, Calif.** —Yesterday, Councilmember Monica Rodriguez led the Public Safety Committee in passing out of Committee a motion that would ultimately enact fire life safety building practices in the city of Los Angeles. Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Rodriguez, a co-sponsor of the motion, announced the initial release of the Motion in June of 2019 and it was most recently approved unanimously by the Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM) on December 3, 2019.

Build with Strength, a coalition of housing advocates, architects, builders, engineers, union organizations, emergency services personnel, faith leaders, and community activists testified in support of the City Council's efforts. Strengthening local and national building codes and ensuring the use of non-combustible materials, especially in fire prone Los Angeles and all of California, is among the organization's top priorities.

"We fully support the City Council's efforts to strengthen building practices in our city," said Ron Miller, Executive Secretary of the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council. "We represent the skilled men and women who build LA. We see firsthand how important safety is. This ordinance will have a huge impact on many communities across the city, and I encourage the City Council to act swiftly and give all residents access to safer and more resilient housing."

Coalition members in Los Angeles include: The Los Angeles Urban League, The Los Angeles/Orange County Building and Construction Trades Council, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Southern California, The California Council of Carpenters and the National Latino Evangelical Coalition.

There are already measures in the city of Los Angeles that address increased fire risk in densely populated communities through the City's Building Code and Fire District 1. This motion instructs the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) to identify areas in the City where the stricter code dictates that builders and construction workers use enhanced fire protections and fire-resistant materials during the building process. This initial motion only covers areas located in Fire District 1, which includes many of Los Angeles' high density, commercial zones.

Blumenfield and Rodriguez's motion specifically instructs the Los Angeles Fire Department, the Department of Building and Safety and the city attorney's office to prepare and present an ordinance to expand Fire District 1. The Public Safety Committee on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 further detailed what criteria the expansion will include:

- Amend Fire District 1 to include high density, commercial, and multi-family designated areas;
- Present an ordinance to require a Fire Protection Plan, as allowed under Chapter 33 of the Los Angeles Fire Code, for all new and significantly altered projects over 150,000 square feet and/or 100,000 square feet if the building is over 30' in height;
- And make recommendations to ensure proper enforcement.

"Our city faces severe fire threats year after year. We want our communities to be safer while still allowing for development," said Walter Contreras, Vice President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC). "Passage

of the motion sponsored by Councilmembers Blumenfield and Rodriguez will allow our city to do that. They've shown great leadership on this issue and we are hopeful that the draft ordinance will be in front of the Committee in 30 days and be approved by the full Council quickly. The future of housing in Los Angeles will be much better off with this policy in place."

**Learn more at [www.buildwithstrength.com](http://www.buildwithstrength.com)**

**###**