

Dear Commissioners:

The Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa is a certified neighborhood council representing over 50,000 stakeholders in the beautiful Los Angeles communities of Westchester, Playa del Rey and Playa Vista.

We applaud the City Planning Commission Department's efforts to address the city-wide issues caused by Group Homes and Community Care Facilities within the City of Los Angeles in its recently Proposed Ordinance regulating these businesses. While we support much of the Department's Proposed Ordinance, we find that there remain a number of serious concerns, as detailed below.

Over-Concentration/Distance Criteria – the ordinance must incorporate a distance criteria to prevent: (a) over-saturation of CCFs serving 7 or more clients, and (b) placement of such facilities in close proximity to sensitive uses, including schools and places of worship.

Enforcement – the Department of Building and Safety should have clear jurisdiction to: (a) inspect and cite all boarding homes, including parolee group homes and sober living facilities, to ensure compliance with the ordinance and other applicable laws, and (b) close facilities that are in violation.

Density – while the Proposed Ordinance references “bedroom,” and “guest room,” it provides no definition of the terms. Section 19(10)(a)(7). The Ordinance must define “bedroom” so as to limit the number of areas within a single family dwelling that may be used for sleeping purposes in CCF's serving 7 or more residents in residential zones, thereby placing a limit on the number of residents in a house. The Density requirement for CCF's serving 7 or more, limits total occupancy to two residents for every bedroom.

The Newport Beach Ordinance regulating group homes defines “bedroom” as “an enclosed space in a structure that is designed such that it could be used for sleeping purposes and meets the room dimension requirements of the most recent edition of the Uniform Building Code, is not accessed directly from the garage, and has one or more windows.” (NPB Ordinance, P. 6, Section 1.) We recommend that the City adopt this definition.

Public Hearings – a public comment process, which includes a requirement to formally notice the neighborhood council with jurisdiction, should be provided to permit stakeholder input in the Planning Department's evaluation of Public Benefit Performance Standards for CCFs.

Findings Regarding Additional Impacts – The staff report should be amended to include additional community concerns that may be provided during a public hearing, such as garage conversions and increased sanitation leading to vermin, and recognized nuisance property findings such as frequent calls for police assistance resulting in arrests, indecent exposure, public urination, public drunkenness and drug use.

Second Hand Smoke - We recommend that the proposed ordinance be amended to adopt a prohibition against second hand smoke as a Performance Standard for all Public Benefits. It has been suggested by the City that this would be too difficult to regulate, but given the serious

negative effects of second hand smoke, particularly for children who often live in residential neighborhoods where CCF's serving 7 or more are located, we believe that the City must ban cigarette smoking at all CCF's serving 7 or more.

Newport Beach's Ordinance provides that "No staff, clients, guests, or any other users of the facility may smoke in an area from which the second hand smoke may be detected on any parcel other than the parcel upon which the facility is located." NPB Ordinance, Section 20.91A.050 (A). A total prohibition, much like the City of Calabasas' ordinance banning smoking in all public areas, would not be difficult to regulate.

Our neighborhood council believes these provisions are important to ensuring the proposed ordinance maintains the character of residential communities while balancing the needs of treating the disabled. We thank you for your consideration.