



**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

November 17, 2020

Honorable Mayor Garcia and Members of the Long Beach City Council
Civic Center Plaza
411 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Support R-70 Fee Waiver Report

Dear Mayor and Members of Long Beach City Council,

Please accept this correspondence on behalf of the Downtown Long Beach (DLBA) Board of Directors and enter into the public record for the City Council meeting scheduled for November 17, 2020, the DLBA's support for the proposed extension of waiving late penalties on business license taxes and fees, and the development of a grant program. As outlined by the DLBA's Vision 2020: Strategic Plan, the DLBA is in favor of the City's effort to support our existing businesses by providing financial relief during this time.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the nature of business activity within our city and state. Public health orders designed to lessen the spread of the disease and protect the most vulnerable among us have also changed how many businesses operate. Many of our small Downtown businesses have experienced a drastic decrease in overall revenue in large part due to mandatory closures or mandatory limits on operating capacity. Furthermore, many businesses have made significant investments into upgrading their storefronts to accommodate new health guidelines and safety protocols.

We are encouraged to see the City of Long Beach is considering all options to help reduce the financial burden many of our existing businesses are facing. The city's current policy of waiving late penalties until November 30, 2020, has provided some relief to some of our hardest-hit industries like retail, restaurants, personal grooming, and health and fitness. This policy should be extended until March 31, 2021, to allow additional time for businesses in need to pay for the associated license fees.

Moreover, we are pleased to see that the City of Long Beach is considering pairing the penalty waiver extension with a grant program to help offset the costs of business license taxes and fees. We encourage the City Council to approve the creation of such a grant program and direct City staff to work with the BIDs in the development and implementation of the program. Since part of the funding covers BID assessments it would be ideal that City staff and BID organizations can work together to develop seamless process for reimbursed assessments. Additionally, the BIDs have shown themselves a critical resource in helping to promote and spread the word on the City's

1.38 Un-Square Miles

other grant funds. Having the BIDs involvement early on will help with the success of business outreach.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our support for the proposed extension of late penalty waiver and the development of the grant program. We encourage the City Council to take action and continue to search for ways to provide relief to our small business community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kraig Kojian', written in a cursive style.

Kraig Kojian
President & CEO

Cc: Dr. Mayor Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach
Tom Modica, City Manager, City of Long Beach
DLBA Board of Directors
John Gross, Director of Financial Management, City of Long Beach
Oscar Orci Director of Development Services, City of Long Beach