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*Promote Aviation. Preserve Business. Protect Jobs.*

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Greater San Fernando  
Valley Chamber of  
Commerce

March 19, 2019

Councilmember Marqueece Harris- Dawson  
City of Los Angeles- City Council -8<sup>th</sup> District  
Chair, Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
200 North Spring St, Room 340  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: PLUM Committee Hearing – Temporary Special Event Permits

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson:

I respectfully submit this testimony and correspondence on behalf of the Van Nuys Airport Association (VNAA), representing more than 100 businesses, and 5,000 employees located at Van Nuys Airport (VNY), the nation's leading business and general aviation airport. I am here today to thank you for your support on this item, and to encourage further evaluation of best management practices, that provide resolution to those recent restrictions imposed by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) for events held in aircraft hangars.

First, I would like to assure you that VNY tenants are committed to ensuring the highest standards of safety and security in the aviation industry. In fact, all the major aviation companies located on the airfield have invested significantly in measures which enable VNY to exceed federal safety and security mandates for general aviation airports in the United States. VNY Airport businesses have worked proactively to implement best practices and have set the national benchmark in this area.

The LADBS administrative procedure to inappropriately classify corporate hangars as warehouse buildings, and categorically deny any temporary change of use permits for hangar facilities, is causing the cancellation or relocation of both business and community events. Historically held events that range from a non-profit fundraiser benefitting local youth to annual company holiday parties, all of which have occurred safely and successfully at VNY for years. The National Business Aviation Association has held regional business forums at VNY, drawing 2,000 business leaders and decision makers from all over the country to participate, and their next event for Los Angeles must now consider other airports where such temporary events are permitted. Such a ban will also deny more than 1,500 San Fernando Valley high school students the opportunity to attend the airport's annual Aviation Career Day, sponsored by the City Council District 6, the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley and many airport employers each spring to maximize local workforce development opportunities.

Our members share any concern for public safety, particularly following the tragic *Ghost Ship* fire that occurred in Oakland, Calif. in December 2016. However, we believe that there is confusion, and that the proposed City of Los Angeles Ordinance to inspect high occupancy buildings that are used for event spaces does not properly consider the differentiators that VNY hangar facilities have in comparison to the *Ghost Ship* incident. To implement restrictions, without first considering facts and solutions, now results in unanticipated negative consequences by restricting airport businesses and the local community to hold special events, in the same fashion and facilities, and often with the same amount of people, where film events remain to be permitted. An effort must be made to differentiate the facts for airport facilities, and consideration given for what best practices and minimum standard mitigation measures can be implemented to assure the application of the highest reasonable level of safety standards for airport facility event planning

As experts in aviation and airport safety and security ourselves, our association would like to continue to collaborate with LADBS to assist in establishing reasonable and effective solutions to this issue. We are available to discuss language and/or provisions that could best make the proposed Ordinance achieve its original intent, and consistent with other communities where such practices and standards exceed any code related concern.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Curt Castagna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Curt Castagna  
VNAA President

cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti  
City Council PLUM Committee Members:  
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield-3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo-1<sup>st</sup> District  
Councilmember Curren Price-9<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Greig Smith-12<sup>th</sup> District  
City Council:  
Councilmember Paul Krekorian-2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Councilmember David Ryu- 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Paul Koretz- 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Nury Martinez- 6<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Monica Rodriguez-7<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Herb Wesson- 10<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Mike Bonin- 11<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell-13<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Jose Huizar- 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Joe Buscaino-15<sup>th</sup> District  
Deborah Flint, LAWA  
Flora Margheritis, VNY