



Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)

December 13, 2016

Entertainment and Facilities Committee
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

#2
Date: 12/13/16
Submitted in EFC Committee
Council File No: 15.1511
Item No.: 2
Deputy: Public

Re: EBT Access at Farmers' Markets (Council File: 15-1511)

Dear Members of the Facilities and Entertainment Committee,

The Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN) is submitting this letter in response to the City Attorney's report that was submitted in September and to the report submitted by the Department of Building and Safety regarding the changes being made to the Temporary Special Event (TSE) permitting process for farmers markets. We strongly support this policy and urge you to support moving this process forward.

The implementation of the changes laid out is critical because we believe that access to fresh and healthy food is a human right and we organize to ensure that access to those foods are available in our community – particularly for extremely low-income and/or homeless residents who have little other access to fresh produce. Downtown LA is home to two full-service grocery stores: Ralphs and Whole Foods – both of which are over a mile away from Skid Row. As a result, many residents travel outside of the Downtown area to get to a grocery store because public transportation is easier and prices are more affordable. Now you can find a farmers market every day of the week in Downtown - markets that are within walking distance for Skid Row residents. By requiring all farmers markets to accept EBT cards as a form of payment, many community members will be able to benefit from accessing fresh, locally grown produce at affordable prices. But enforcement of this policy is key. The reports from the City Attorney and Building and Safety and the recommendations outlined in them will help ensure that all markets are truly offering supporting this access.

Again, we urge you to move this process forward, and we look forward to continuing to work with you all to ensure that all LA residents – particularly those living in poverty without traditional access to healthy foods – have access to fresh fruits and vegetables through our city's farmers markets.

Sincerely,

Ariana Alcaraz
Community Organizer, Los Angeles Community Action Network