

2. A RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE TO PROVIDE NECESSARY FUNDING FOR CUPC TO FUFILL ITS OBLIGATION TO INSPECT RAILROAD LINES TO ENSURE THAT OPERATORS ARE REMOVING ILLEGAL DUMPING, GRAFFITI AND HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS THAT DEGRADE THE QAULITY OF LIFE AND RESULTS IN INCREASED PUBLIC SAFETLY CONCERNS FOR COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ABUTT THE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY.

Source: City of South Gate

Concurrence of five or more cities/city officials:

Cities: City of Bell Gardens; City of Bell; City of Commerce; City of Cudahy; City of El Segundo; City of Glendora; City of Huntington Park; City of La Mirada; City of Long Beach; City of Lynwood; City of Montebello; City of Paramount; City of Pico Rivera

Referred to: Housing, Community and Economic Development; and Transportation, Communications and Public Works

WHEREAS, ensuring the quality of life for communities falls upon every local government including that blight and other health impacting activities are addressed in a timely manner by private property owners within its jurisdictional boundaries for their citizens, businesses and institutions; and

WHEREAS, Railroad Operators own nearly 6,000 miles of rail right-of-way throughout the State of California which is regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration and/or the California Public Utilities Commission for operational safety and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is the enforcing agency for railroad safety in the State of California and has 41 inspectors assigned throughout the entire State to inspect and enforce regulatory compliance over thousands of miles of rail line; and

WHEREAS, areas with rail line right-of-way within cities and unincorporated areas are generally located in economically disadvantaged zones and/or disadvantaged communities of color where the impact of blight further lowers property values and increases the likelihood of unsound sanitary conditions and environmental impacts upon them; and

WHEREAS, many communities are seeing an increase in illegal dumping, graffiti upon infrastructure and homeless encampments due to the lax and inadequate oversight by regulatory agencies; and

WHEREAS, local governments have no oversight or regulatory authority to require operators to better maintain and clean their properties as it would with any other private property owner within its jurisdictional boundaries. Thus such local communities often resort to spending their local tax dollars on cleanup activities or are forced to accept the delayed and untimely response by operators to cleaning up specific sites, and;

WHEREAS, that railroad operators should be able to provide local communities with a fixed schedule in which their property will be inspected and cleaned up on a reasonable and regular schedule or provide for a mechanism where they partner with and reimburse local governments for an agreed upon work program where the local government is enabled to remove items like illegal dumping, graffiti and encampments; and

WHEREAS, the State has made it a priority to deal with homeless individuals and the impacts illegal encampments have upon those communities and has a budgetary surplus that can help fund the CPUC in better dealing with this situation in both a humane manner as well a betterment to rail safety.

RESOLVED, at the League of California Cities, General Assembly, assembled at the League Annual Conference on September 24, 2021, in Sacramento, that the League calls for the Governor and the Legislature to work with the League and other stakeholders to provide adequate regulatory authority and necessary funding to assist cities with these railroad right-of-way areas so as to adequately deal with illegal dumping, graffiti and homeless encampments that proliferate along the rail lines and result in public safety issues. The League will work with its member cities to educate federal and state officials to the quality of life and health impacts this challenge has upon local communities, especially those of color and/or environmental and economic hardships.