



CITY OF CARSON

RESOLUTION NO. 21-147

PROCLAMATION PROCLAIMING THE EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY IN THE CITY OF CARSON AND REQUESTING A COUNTY AND GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION OF EMERGENCY AND PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION OF DISASTER

WHEREAS, on October 4, 2021, a noxious odor that smelled like "rotten eggs", later determined to be hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), was reported to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) by the City of Carson; and

WHEREAS, on October 6, 2021, the strength of the odor became much more intense and pervasive through the City of Carson, and AQMD and Los Angeles County Public Works investigation teams concentrated their efforts in and near the Dominguez Channel; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2021, AQMD, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Health Hazmat, and Department of Public Health teams focused on the Dominguez Channel and detected elevated levels of H_2S ; and

WHEREAS, H_2S can cause adverse health effects at both acute and chronic exposure levels, and Carson residents, employees and business owners have reported such effects, including dizziness, headaches, eye and throat irritation, nausea, vomiting, and other similar symptoms of H_2S exposure; and

WHEREAS, on October 11, 2021, the Carson City Council, declared a public nuisance due to the foul odor from the H₂S emanating from the Dominguez Channel and its negative impacts on residents and businesses in the city, particularly within close proximity to the Channel; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2021, Los Angeles County Public Works began to spray *Epoelon*, a chemical neutralizing agent, in the Dominguez Channel and stated that it would take three to five days to be effective; and

WHEREAS, on October 18, 2021, Los Angeles County Public Works increased its spraying of *Epoelon* and began to install a system of nano aeration bubblers in the Dominguez Channel to increase the amount of dissolved oxygen and reduce the level of anaerobic digestion of organic material in the Channel, which they believe is the source of the H₂S and as of the date of this Proclamation it is not completely certain this approach will work; and

WHEREAS, the City of Carson has a majority-minority residential population of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian-American and Pacific Islanders, a significant population who are low- or fixed income, have disabilities, poor health, or access and functional needs, or are senior citizens, and that this population has suffered historical as well as current-day public health and environmental inequities due to the disproportionate health impacts of the COVID pandemic, the intensity of automobile and diesel emissions, noise and vibration from trucks in the goods movement industry, and the location of major oil refineries and other petroleum-related facilities; and

WHEREAS, a state of emergency proclamation from the City and County, and state and federal disaster declarations will help the County or the City in requests for public health resources to respond to impacts of exposure to H₂S; and

WHEREAS, many businesses in the City of Carson are already strained and just beginning to recover from the COVID pandemic and are now suffering from lost sales or choosing to close their locations in Carson due to the overpowering smell of H₂S and its impacts on their customers and employees; and

WHEREAS, a state of emergency proclamation from the City and County, and state and federal disaster declarations will help make businesses eligible for certain disaster assistance programs such as Small Business Administration loans and other types of programs; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2021, Los Angeles County Public Works advised that excavation of the organic material at the bottom of the Dominguez Channel and restoration of the channel bottom and banks is the long-term solution to the root cause of the problem and it is expected to take several months at a minimum for planning and permitting with county, state, and federal regulatory agencies before work can be initiated; and

WHEREAS, while the solution may bring long-term benefits to the Dominguez Channel and the Carson community, the short- and medium term community impacts of the excavation operation are of local concern, especially in terms of potential new odor impacts, the characterization of the sludge at the bottom of the Channel and the inclusion of toxics in it, and a long-term trucking operation conducted from the banks of the channel, and the excavation needs to be accompanied by a long-term restoration of this truly unique body of water; and

WHEREAS, a state of emergency proclamation from the City and County, and state and federal disaster declarations will expedite the provision of county, state, and federal resources and relief from certain county, state, and federal regulatory and environmental permitting processes, and furthermore may assist in the search for resources for the improvement of the Dominguez Channel and make it a regional asset; and

WHEREAS, the long term health effects due to chronic exposure to H₂S is of the highest concern and the situation is now of such length, severity, and magnitude that the effective response is beyond the capabilities of the City of Carson, even when partnering with the County of Los Angeles in responding to residents' needs, and the City also finds itself responding to an emergency within an emergency, as it has devoted considerable staff resources to COVID response, including COVID testing, vaccination events, food distribution programs, and senior check-in programs and is now stretched thin in trying to manage the first line response to both emergencies; and

WHEREAS, a state of emergency proclamation from the City and County, and state and federal disaster declarations will assist the City to recover from known and not-yet-known impacts to its budget, staffing and programs affected by the ancillary impacts of the emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that a *Local Emergency* as defined in the California Government Code §8558(c), and Carson Municipal Code §3705(a) exists in the City of Carson and that the Carson City Council shall ratify this proclamation within 7 days and review within 30 days following, until such *Local Emergency* is terminated, the need for continuing the *Local Emergency* at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant; and

IT IS HEREBY DECLARED AND ORDERED, that a copy of this Proclamation be forwarded to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors with the request that they proclaim a local emergency in the County of Los Angeles; and that a copy to be forwarded to the Governor of California with the request that the Governor proclaim the City of Carson and the County of Los Angeles to be in a state of emergency or a concurrence from the Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and further that the Governor requests a presidential declaration of disaster and requests the availability and administration of Small Business Administration (SBA) loans through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that all relevant county, state, and federal regulatory agencies with oversight in, near, or over the Dominguez Channel are requested to utilize and employ personnel, equipment, and facilities for the performance of any and all activities designed to prevent or alleviate the actual and threatened hazard due to the emergency; direct them to provide supplemental services and equipment to provide for the health and safety of the residents of the affected area; make, amend, or rescind orders and regulations during the emergency; and temporarily suspend any non-safety related statutes, ordinances, regulations, rules, or permitting processes involving the immediate cleanup and restoration of the channel waters, bottoms, and banks; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a request is made to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to request the Office of Emergency Management to activate the Los Angeles County Emergency Operations Center to coordinate public information and resources and establish a Local Assistance Center to assist the residents of Carson and surrounding areas in the supply and distribution of air purifiers and air filters, relocation of affected residents to

hotels outside of the immediate impact area, medical assistance for adverse health effects or disability related needs, transportation assistance to and from work, school, or medical appointments, and monetary assistance with other personal, health, and safety needs for as long as hazardous conditions exist.

PROCLAIMED the 25th day of October, 2021



SHARON LANDERS
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

ATTEST:

DEPUTY CITY CLERK JOY SIMARAGO

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CITY ATTORNEY SUNNY SOLTANI