



**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

September 7, 2021

Long Beach City Council
Civic Center Plaza
411 West Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Agenda Item #18; Fresh Start Long Beach Program

Dear Mayor Garcia and Honorable City Council Members,

Please accept this correspondence on behalf of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA) Board of Directors and enter into the public record for the City Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 7, 2021, its support of the proposed Fresh Start Long Beach Program for Businesses Closed by COVID-19.

As the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID), the core objective of DLBA is to encourage entrepreneurship in the area while also assisting and supporting existing business owners. Downtown Long Beach continues to feel the economic effects of COVID-19, with many small businesses still experiencing reduced foot traffic, employee attrition, and revenue shortfalls. The proposed Fresh Start Program can provide meaningful, direct assistance to local businesses still facing financial challenges from the pandemic.

As moratoriums on rent begin to sunset, it is imperative that City Council take action on the Fresh Start Program. That being said, DLBA recognizes that the proposed assistance is one of many financial assistance strategies adopted by the City of Long Beach, including fee-related payment plans and previous commercial rental assistance grants. As more State and Federal funds become available, DLBA hopes City Council will continue to fund meaningful direct-assistance programs to small businesses citywide.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our input regarding the proposed Fresh Start Program, and we encourage the City Council to continue discussion on best practices for the project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kraig Kojian
President & CEO

cc: DLBA Board of Directors
DLBA Economic Development Committee