



**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

March 22, 2024

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
1021 O St., Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SB 969 (Wiener) Entertainment Zones - Support

Dear Senator Wiener,

Please accept this correspondence on behalf of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DTLB Alliance) Board of Directors expressing strong support for SB 969, a measure that would allow local jurisdictions to create designated outdoor “entertainment zones” that will enable local brick-and-mortar bars and restaurants to sell takeout alcoholic beverages to patrons for consumption at street fairs, outdoor festivals, and other activations.

DTLB Alliance is a non-profit organization representing more than 1,500 businesses and 3,200 commercial and residential property owners within the two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Downtown Long Beach. As a leading voice for the Downtown community, DTLB Alliance recognizes the positive impact of events, festivals, and other community activations have on our brick-and-mortar businesses. Struggling to regain patron traffic post-pandemic, cities, community groups, and BIDs continue to drive events into our business-heavy neighborhoods. While businesses directly benefit from these surges in engagement, the ability to participate directly via designated “entertainment zones” would strengthen the impact of these efforts and bolster our businesses.

Downtown Long Beach is the home of several major events throughout the year. These events range from major, nationally promoted festivals like the Grand Prix, Cali Vibes, and LGBTQ Pride to minor, local celebrations such as Juneteenth, Beach Streets, and Dia de Los Muertos. These activations attract over one million visitors to our Downtown streets, parks, event venues and businesses each year. The Downtown Long Beach Alliance hosts a variety of food-based events featuring flavors from our unique neighborhoods. These activations draw two to five thousand people into the area per day. Currently, businesses located within each major entertainment hub (e.g., Pine Ave.) are encouraged to participate as vendors within the designated event path; however, if unable, receive less benefit as event goers cannot interact with their business directly without leaving the outdoor event space. SB 969 would provide these businesses the opportunity to engage event patrons without incurring costs and restrictions (e.g., equipment, labor, permits, etc.) associated with vending.

SB 969 will aid the recovery of our Downtown small businesses by removing barriers for participation in outdoor events. It will allow municipalities to create “entertainment zones” that allow neighborhood businesses – which are currently barred from selling alcoholic beverages to-go during festivals – to participate on equal footing with outside event vendors and to engage in new types of events structured around “entertainment zones.” Cities can create areas that allow outside vendors to come in and sell alcohol in open containers. To address this inequity, SB 969 will allow local restaurants and bars to also participate.



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If SB 969 were to be approved, we stand ready to work with the City of Long Beach, our business owners, and residents to create “entertainment zones” in Downtown and foster vibrant active corridors. We thank you for the introduction of SB 969 and urge your collective support.

Sincerely,

Austin Metoyer
President & CEO

