



Labor peace hurts small businesses

By Nat Trives
June 20, 2018

As a resident for the past six decades and former mayor of this great city, I am very concerned about the pending consideration of what is known as a labor peace agreement at the Santa Monica City Council.

For anyone who knows me, knows that I am a friend of labor. I believe in workers' rights to organize and have been a member of six unions over the years including serving as vice president of the state's largest police union that played a major role in creating our state's public employee's meet and confer law which paved the way for public employee unions in California.

We have all seen the changes that have been occurring in this City. Local businesses that have been here for years have begun to leave. Vacancies are sprinkled along Main Street, Ocean Avenue, Montana and across the City. National corporate chains are coming into the City to fill these vacancies.

If the City Council moves forward with ANY labor peace agreement, there will be an acceleration of national chains coming in here.

During my tenure on City Council, we paved the way for many of the character-defining elements of our community like the Pier and the Promenade. Any labor peace agreement would greatly harm the independent businesses and our uniquely Santa Monica character.

The idea of this labor peace agreement is very concerning considering we have never had an issue in this City that a LPA would solve. In fact, to date, we have not seen any evidence of any problem that would impact City revenues. If anything may impact City revenues, it would be the enactment of an LPA because more businesses would leave.

Beyond the devastating impact this would have our City's unique character of local businesses, I do not like the provisions that would eliminate workers' privacy. The San Francisco Airport "model LPA" would allow any union to obtain workers' home addresses and phone numbers regardless of workers' permission. Furthermore this opens up safety risks as there are no safeguards or even background checks on who has access to this very personal information.

The Council also heard firsthand how an employee was approached at her home by the union and how she felt that her privacy was violated. We cannot allow for this type of intimidation to occur in our City.

We should not let longstanding, good employers who have dedicated their careers to Santa Monica be bullied by a union that does not represent their employees. I am proud of being a part of this progressive City and proud of the business community that supported providing workers' higher wages and paid sick leave. Why should we now go that bridge too far and force them to actually leave.

Please join the effort to oppose any LPA on Tuesday, June 26 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. We all need to support our local businesses and now is the time!

Nat Trives is a Santa Monica resident and former Mayor.