

PRESS RELEASE

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Greig Smith Council District 12



LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMAN GREIG SMITH

Councilmembers Smith and Rosendahl Advance "Pay-As-You-Throw" Program to Reward Those Who Generate Less Trash

Los Angeles – The City Council unanimously approved an amendment to the Los Angeles Municipal Code to enable the City to implement the "Pay As You Throw" program introduced by Councilmembers Greig Smith and Bill Rosendahl, which would reduce the trash fees of people who reduce their waste and recycle more, on Tuesday, July 29.

"We are doing the fiscally and environmentally responsible thing by rewarding those who landfill less and recycle more," Councilman Smith said. "If people produce less trash, they should pay less."

"We are creating a system that is more fair to our residents and more environmentally responsible," said Councilman Bill Rosendahl, who partnered with Smith on the program. "Residents will have the opportunity to save money on their trash bills by reducing, reusing, and recycling."

The program, introduced by Smith and Rosendahl and approved in concept during the 2008/2009 City budget hearings, is meant to benefit seniors and other people with small households. It is an effort to make the Mayor's trash fee increase more equitable for those who reduce the amount of trash they send to landfills and recycle more.

"Pay as You Throw" would create a trash fee discount to encourage residents to reduce their trash and increase their recycling. Smith estimates that for every 30-gallon reduction in the trash that residents generate, they could receive a \$5 to \$10 reduction in their monthly trash fees. Those who use more and larger bins would pay slightly more.

This strategy would benefit the environment and residents' pocketbooks, and furthers the waste reduction and recycling goals of Councilman Smith's RENEW LA plan, which was approved by the Council as City policy. RENEW LA would make L.A. an environmental leader in the nation by reducing to almost zero the trash that goes to polluting landfills by boosting recycling and reuse, reducing waste and building conversion technology plants that would extract energy and sellable materials from our trash.

Councilman Smith voted against the trash fee increase when it was initially proposed by the Mayor. Although he agreed that it was prudent to pay a fee commensurate with the service provided, he felt the increase was too much, too fast and favored a gradual increase.

Historically, Los Angeles has been the only major U.S. city that did not charge for residential trash hauling service. That meant that the City subsidized trash pickup with about \$200 million a year out of the City's General Fund that could be going toward Fire, Police, streets and other necessary services, at a time the City faces a \$400 million budget shortfall.

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