



February 3, 2026

Economic Development & Jobs Committee
 Chair Curren D. Price, Jr.
 200 N. Spring St., Room 430
 Los Angeles 90012

Councilmember Adrin Nazarian
 200 N. Spring St., Room 435
 Los Angeles 90012

Vice Chair Hugo Soto- Martinez
 200 N Spring St, Suite 480
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilmember Traci Park
 200 N Spring St
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilmember Ysabel Jurado
 200 N. Spring Street, Suite 425
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support Garment Businesses: Launch the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot Program!

Honorable Councilmembers,

Businesses in the Fashion Industry have suffered tremendous losses due to the ongoing immigration raids and changes in federal tariff policies. The constant fear and anxiety of a vulnerable workforce coupled with the rising cost of supplies and operation has created instability for garment manufacturers and fashion businesses across the City.

On June 6th, a massive immigration raid in the Fashion District at an apparel business started a chain reaction of kidnappings of Angelinos off the streets and in their place of work. Our community saw hundreds of masked and armed immigration agents and military patrolling the streets of Los Angeles. It is no longer safe to walk to the grocery store, ride the bus, and go to work. Garment workers fearful of being separated from their families have had to make the

difficult decision between reporting to work or staying home where it is safer. The absence of workers is felt in the streets around Santee Alley, which are usually filled with street vendors, customers, and workers going to their jobs in the buildings surrounding the Fashion District.

Workers not reporting to work has had an impact on small businesses in the fashion industry. Some businesses have had to close their doors, fulfillment of orders has become increasingly difficult, and employers have adjusted business operations and hours to ensure the safety of workers. Garment businesses, much like other industries whose workforces have been impacted, need the support of their local government in order to make it through the unforeseeable future. **The City of Los Angeles has an opportunity to stand by the garment industry and follow through with the implementation of the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot Program. This program has been at a standstill within the city for years and there is no indication as to when it will officially launch. We request the City of Los Angeles prioritize the launch of the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot Program and identify funding to move forward all the elements of the program** so that businesses impacted by raids and unstable economic policies can have access to long term resources and investments.

History

In September 2023, the Garment Worker Center (GWC) began collaborating with EWDD and a taskforce of diverse stakeholders. The discussions amongst these diverse stakeholders led to the development of the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot Program, which includes:

1. **An Economic Development and Real Estate Position** to assist emerging and existing businesses to thrive and remain located in LA as well as to attract new businesses to LA in the garment and fashion industry.
2. **WorkSource Center and Business Source Center Pop-ups** to provide technical and workforce development assistance tailored to support garment workers and businesses in the Fashion District such as:
 - Informing small businesses of potential grants and funding opportunities and providing application support.
 - Marketing support to help bring business to Los Angeles and showcase the skills of workers and the industry here in LA.
3. **A Garment Sector Intermediary within its Workforce Development Division** to coordinate worker upskilling assistance and industry programs.

In May 2023, dozens of GWC members urged the City Council to maintain funding for 8 critical positions at EWDD. Two of those positions were to be set out for this program. We were told by multiple City Council offices that the positions were secured in the 2024-2025 budget cycle, but EWDD reported differently and the program was never launched.

Soon thereafter, two iterations of a draft transmittal were drafted by EWDD to present to Council with an anticipated launch in October 2024 with a press conference involving the Mayor's office, Council offices, and participants of the taskforce. However, internal staffing changes within EWDD postponed the launch and coordination of the program. EWDD has since committed once again to launch the program with existing resources as reflected in the 2025 budget.

In January of 2026, we met with Deputy Mayor Brenda Shockey, Workforce Development Director Tammy Ortuno, and with EWDD General Managers. EWDD has identified Businessessource and Worksource Centers to begin promoting their services in the Fashion District and GWC will be meeting with them next month. We'd like to collaborate with Councilmembers, EWDD, and the Mayor's office. We are at a critical point to fully launch this program. however. in order to sustain the program long term. we need the Council's support.

Request

It is time that the city invests in an industry that provides thousands of jobs and is the largest in the nation. Just this year, the City of New York approved a rezoning plan that included significant support for their local garment industry such as; a campaign and website to elevate local manufacturers and creative entrepreneurs, 1.8 million in public and private funding to support designers and garment manufacturers; \$50 million to help nonprofit organizations develop permanent, below-market space for the garment industry; and a dedicated point person from New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) to support the continued vitality of the Garment District. **Many of these programs mirror the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot Program that the Garment Worker Center and business allies have advocated for the past 3 years**, yet these systems of support remain at a stand still.

We request that as leaders of the Economic Development and Jobs Committee and representatives of Garment workers and businesses you work with the Economic and Workforce Development Department to launch and fund the Garment and Fashion Industry Pilot and support investment for the industry.

The Garment Worker Center would like to meet with you to discuss progress that is being made on one element of the program using existing funds allocated to EWDD and to discuss a budget request to fully fund this program as it was envisioned by the taskforce. We appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Garment Worker Center

Businesses and Organizations

Astor & Orion/ Love Lost & Found Jewelry

Black Fiber & Textile Network

DYG Los Angeles

Eco-Stylist

Ethix Merch

Fibershed

GIBC INC dba Ragroyalty.com

Greta Garmel

H&F Fashion capital inc

KNF Enterprises

Katie Curates

Lucky Dewdrop Designs

MYM Organics

Old Gold Vintage

POPLINEN

PROCLAIM

Recycle2Riches

Reformation

Responsible Apparel Industry Collective

Roboro

Rule Design & Development

Women for Women's Wear