



Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Re: Support of Item #33

Dear Mayor and Austin City Council Members:

Hispanic Advocates Business Leaders of Austin (HABLA) would like to officially go on record in support of Council Member José Velásquez's proposed resolution to simplify the ongoing inspections and regular reviews of food trucks as outlined in Item 33 Council Resolution.

As you know more than 80% of the 1,500+ mobile food trucks in Austin, Travis County are owned and operated by minority entrepreneurs. We are also certain that many of the mobile food truck operators are Latinos. Our deeply rooted history and culture documents our strong entrepreneur spirit and work ethic.

Here's the history, since the 1960s, Mexican loncheras had been selling incredible food, but the first food truck selling tacos would not come until 1974. One Raul Martinez bought an old ice cream van and opened King Taco in LA selling \$70 worth of tacos outside a bar. It's rumored that a few evenings later, he sold more than \$150. Six months later, he opened a brick-and-mortar store, which become an LA institution. By 1987, there were three King Taco trucks doing business in the city.

Today, that economic impact continues across America, Texas, and Austin. In fact, nationwide it's a 2.2 billion industry, that employs nearly 55,000 workers supporting 50,000 small businesses.

This data documents our Latino stories of a driven, resourceful, and resilient community that is proud of its culture while at the same time fully integrated into U.S. society. Latino entrepreneurs are ready to surmount any challenges thrown at us, and we are increasingly unapologetic about our place in the nation and local communities.

We greatly appreciate and support Item#33 and encourage you to support this item.

Thanks for your continued leadership and public service.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Saldaña, Co-Founder
HABLA

ABOUT HABLA:

HABLA is a "THINK TANK" group and forum made up of local Hispanic/Latino community and business leaders committed to discussing and developing sustainable solutions on current affairs, public policies and quality of life issues impacting our local Austin Hispanic/Latino community.