

November 11, 2012

Food Trucks are food for our community and economy. They offer District residents and workers popular choices and competition through a variety of great cuisine at great prices, adding to the vibrancy of downtown and creating hundreds of jobs.

These benefits could be lost if your current proposal is adopted. Your proposal grants new, sweeping powers to unelected District Department of Transportation officials to decide where food trucks can and cannot serve customers. You are also proposing to restrict food trucks where there is less than 10 feet of 'unobstructed' sidewalk -- without clearly defining what an 'obstruction' is and threatening to limit food trucks in popular parts of downtown.

We should be working together to improve choices, quality, safety, and value for consumers, not limit them. Please work with the Food Truck Association and all the members of our community to put forward food truck regulations that are clear, tailored to address specific needs and make common sense.

We Need Food Truck Rules That Work!

Sincerely,

1. A. Patel
2. L. Ross
3. Alim Needham
4. Richard Bowman
5. Lyndsey Medsker
6. Mohammad Majid

November 11, 2012

I am writing as a citizen of the District to state my simple preference that food trucks be given the least amount of regulatory obstacles possible. They should be allowed to operate in virtually all areas of the city (with notable exceptions for security, public access, etc). I do not agree with the rule requiring 10ft sidewalk access, which I feel is too limiting. I also do not feel they should be corralled into special "zones." These food trucks are relatively new (at least, this quantity of them is a new sight), but they are providing a very valuable service with inexpensive, quick lunch options throughout the business areas of our city. While they should be taxed in a manner similar to any other restaurant, I believe they should be allowed to be as mobile as possible. I do not support the regulations as they are currently proposed and would prefer a more lenient regulatory load on these trucks.

Best,  
Matthew Davis  
3881 Newark St NW

November 11, 2012

I love all the food trucks and am against the proposed legislation.

Respectfully,

Kimberly Hancher

November 11, 2012

I am the owner of Crepeaway restaurant on 20th and L Street.

From 2006 - 2010 I have not seen a single brick and mortar restaurant close its doors in that area.

In 2010 the food trucks started appearing on L street.

Since then the following restaurants have closed:

- 1: SPICE EXPRESS - 1020 19th Street (19th between L and K)
- 2: SCHAKOLAD CHOCOLATE FACTORY - 1107 19th street (19th and L)
- 3: LITE STARS - 2101 L STREET (21st & L)
- 4: JAVA GREEN - 1020 19th Street (19th between L and K)
- 5: MAOZ - 1817 M Street (18th & M)

In my opinion these closures are directly related to the appearance of the food trucks on L Street from Noon-2pm Mon-Fri. Those are the hours where restaurants make the majority of their revenue during the business lunch rush. Now the restaurants must share that business with several food trucks.

If the trucks are not regulated, then many more mom and pop shops will go out of business.

Saad Jallad

Mr. Helder Gil  
Legislative Affairs Specialists  
Department Of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs  
November 7, 2012

My name is Jane Lyons. I am co-owner of STIX Food Truck. We are a D.C. Food Truck vending in the City. My business partner Leah Perez and I chose Washington to start our business because we knew we could be a success here. The existing Food Truck rules that were in place had a way to go but were still workable and allowed us that success. I am very, very concerned for the future of STIX if the new regulations as they stand are put in affect. My savings, my heart and my future as well as my families depends on the success of my business.

The kitchen we prepare our food in is in the District. As are all of our Vendors that we purchase our produce, our meat, our seafood, dry goods and fuel for our truck.

STIX has been in business for close to two years. Our business has grown enough that we have gone from two to three employees in the summer months 4. As of October 1, we are collecting a 10% sales tax to further contribute to the districts economy.

I ask you to take my comments and suggestions to heart. We have to have a free enterprise. All business needs the same ability to succeed and flourish. Not be held back by special interest groups or one government agency.

Below are the proposed regulations I am most concerned with and my position on them.

• **530 VENDING LOCATIONS: MOBILE ROADWAY VENDING LOCATIONS:  
AUTHORIZED LOCATIONS**

**530.1** The DDOT Director shall designate MRV locations where Mobile Roadway Vendors, with valid MRV parking permits, may park in order to legally vend from public space.

**` This is too broad to determine where the MRV locations will be. There is not any criteria to determine how many locations there will be, or how many trucks will be allowed to vend. MRV locations should ONLY be in extremely high density areas, namely Farragut, Franklin, and Metro Center. Not scattered through out the city. There simply is no need for random MRVs.**

530.8 An MRV location shall not be established:

- (c) Where the adjacent unobstructed sidewalk is less than ten feet (10 ft.) wide in the Central Business District or seven feet (7 ft.) wide outside the Central Business District;**

**Attempting to apply the same restrictions to Food Trucks that are applied to brick and mortar or sidewalk cafes' doesn't make sense. What is an obstruction? A parking meter, a sign, People, flowers? Is this regulation for the sake of safety? If so, I don't believe there is one documented instance of an injury caused by a Food Truck line. It is the Food trucks responsibility now to keep sidewalk access for the public and to keep an orderly line.**

533.1                    The DDOT Director has the discretion to add, modify or remove a Mobile Roadway Vending location at any time

**`To give one person, in one agency, the sweeping power to alter people's livelihood is just not acceptable. There has to be a means of appeal, a way other voices are heard about a decision that has been made. There needs to be a committee made up of Food Truck owners and DDOT that can oversee decisions before any MRV locations are removed, altered, or added.**

These are new food Truck Regulations that I think will benefit everyone.

We are no longer considered Ice cream Trucks and under "The Ice Cream Truck" rule. STIX can stay in one spot and serve its customers without worrying about being asked to move on.

Employee badges for vending instead of licenses. This is huge for the small business owner. It is an affordable way I can be off the truck, while one of my employees runs the truck for the day.

I want more than anything to be able to operate my business in the District in a safe, responsible and profitable way. It is clear that our fans and customers want us here as much as we want to be here. It is in every ones interest to rectify these differences and to write regulations that enable us all to be a success.

Thank-you

Jane Lyons Co-owner Stix Inc.

November 11, 2012

Dear Mr. Gil:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed street vending regulations. According to a recent story in the Washington Post, the proposed regulation would apply conditions intended for sidewalk cafés to food trucks. It appears to prohibit these trucks from most of the locations they currently serve for no logical reason.

I regularly eat at the food trucks near Virginia and 21st NW, an area restricted by the proposed regulations. Like most DC workers, I don't have time to go the several blocks to a sit down restaurant and eat. I have enough time to pop out the front door, grab something delicious from one of the many food trucks serving our area without trouble, and get back to work. Without the convenience of the food trucks, I'd probably just stock the office freezer with frozen meals, bought in my home state of Virginia. These trucks generate additional income for the DC economy and tax revenue to boot.

For these and many other reasons, I hope the food trucks will continue unhindered and regulations will be well-thought and considerate of the boon they bring to the DC economy.

Best,  
Mariah Mercer

**Mr. Helder Gil**  
**Legislative Affairs Specialist**  
**Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs**  
**1100 Fourth Street SW**  
**Room 5164**  
**Washington, D.C. 20024**

Dear Mr. Gil,

My name is Juan Jose Quintana and I am the owner of Rolling Ficelle food trucks. I am also a resident of Ward 6. In March 2009, I moved to the District to start a food truck. I settled on DC due to its vibrant culture, strong economy and most importantly, the vending laws. The rules weren't perfect, but being a blooming industry, and with the warm welcome of the city population, I expected that in the subsequent years the rules would improve rather than be made worse.

I started in May 2011, and today I own two trucks and am developing two other projects, which are a catering and a brick-and-mortar business. I employ nine DC residents and project that by the end of 2013 Rolling Ficelle may have around 20 employees and four business up and running offering good quality meal options in the city. As you can see my company is growing and creating jobs in the District, contributing our "two cents" toward the recovery of our economy.

We food truckers are hard-working entrepreneurs. Almost all of us sacrificed either our 401k or life savings to risk it all for this dream. Most of us work around 12+ hours and commit our lives to bringing great meal options to DC. And I can assure you that almost 80% of us have it as a goal to open a brick-and-mortar business in the near future.

Food trucks are food for our community and economy. We offer District residents and workers popular choices and competition through a variety of great cuisine at great prices, adding to the vibrancy of downtown and creating hundreds of jobs.

These benefits could be lost if the current proposals are adopted, cutting short many dreams and means of living for hundreds of families in the DC area. We support common-sense approaches to balancing the many needs and uses of public space, but these regulations have to include us, since the current ones, exclude us entirely. The purpose of regulations is to protect public safety, ensure fair business practices and promote economic growth. I only ask that a revised version of these regulations be created to accurately reflect these principles. Thank you for your consideration and hard work on making DC a better place.

Sincerely,

**Juan Jose Quintana**  
**Owner, Rolling Ficelle**  
**135 R St SW**



November 11, 2012

I am writing to oppose the regulations regarding mobile street vendors because these regulations would make it impossible for the food trucks to stop in locations such as L'Enfant plaza. Unobstructed sidewalks of 10 feet are rare in DC and the regulation is unrealistic.

These food trucks are wonderful additions to the DC dining scene and bring so many options to those of us SW DC. Limiting their ability to stop at locations around the city is short sighted and will significantly impact the eating options for thousands of government workers who are faced with a bleak restaurant scene (especially in SW). Please expand the reach of the food trucks, not limit it. We welcome a healthy, competitive, vibrant food scene everywhere in the city!

Brett Tarnutzer  
Washington DC

November 11, 2012

I read the Washington Post article Saturday November 10th regarding food truck regulations. I ask that city government develop regulations that are fair to the city and the regulated and are easy to follow. It certainly does sound as if the regulations, while offering 'exemptions', are really dependent on those exemptions to work. This makes no sense. Regulations should be easy to follow and make sense for those regulated. Exemptions should be very very very rarely needed.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you would like a reader to be of assistance as the regulations are adjusted.

Food trucks are a great asset to the economic life of the city!

Judy Tiger

November 11, 2012

My name is Jerry Trice and I am the owner of the Chef Driven DC food truck. I have been a professional chef in the metro DC area for over 17 years. I have always held my head high as a Culinary Institute of America alumni and maintained professionalism in every aspect of the food service industry. It has always been a long-term dream to own my own restaurant and I have pursued this vehemently for the past 6 years. I have come to the realization that currently, given the economic downturn and stranglehold of prime locations by big landlords, a mobile food business is more of a viable reality while the search continues for a suitable brick and mortar still continues.

Through hard work and sheer determination we launched just this past April. My business has grown more rapidly than projected. Currently I have 4 full time employees and am actively seeking another. Profit margins have always been slim in food service and we are holding our own currently. This is by no means a get rich quick plan for me or any other food truck owners. We rent kitchen space in the District, I use mechanics in the District, rent storage in the District, as well as use vendors based in the District.

All the while our expansion plans are still trudging along with the search of a suitable brick and mortar in the city. I strongly believe that DC can and will support a thriving local, artisanal chef driven restaurant concept with its' vast labor market and those residents who currently seek those inspirations both inside and outside of the District.

These aspirations would be all but extinguished if the new regulations were put into effect. This would mean a devastating, monumental setback for my company.

In particular, the new regs stipulate food trucks must operate with at least 10 feet of unobstructed sidewalk width outside of a MRV location in order to comply. This means 8 out of 10 of our best locations would be out of play. And with the proposal suggesting a MRV location would not be established "where the adjacent unobstructed sidewalk is less than 10 feet (10ft.) wide in the Central Business District...." this leaves very few applicable locations. This act would put current mobile food vendors in a race to occupy what few acceptable spaces we could find, bringing even more surrogate vehicles into play congesting rush hour parking spots and non-rush hour spots alike.

In a DDOT meeting with food truck owners and employees Oct.15, 2012 DDOT officials were more than vague in answering direct questions about how MRV location were selected as well as many other questions. Officials stated that they CAN make exceptions to the 10 ft. rule but there is no process or criteria in the proposed regulations to determine how these locations are determined or how many trucks are allowed. There was no answer as to how these spaces would be allotted, available spaces vs. MRV permits distributed, or how these locations are to be ticketed or managed. I believe that these regs presented do not have a great deal of real solutions to the congested streets issue. They would mean doom for many operators. Needless to say, all this makes food truck owners very nervous.

We simply need regs that work.

In Earnest,

Jerry Trice  
ChefDriven DC

November 11, 2012

Dear Mr. Gil,

I am writing to forward my comments, as a member of the public, against the proposed vending regulations for food trucks (DC Vending Regs).

The proposed regulations requiring that food trucks not vendor from a space with sidewalk space less than 10 feet wide in the Central Business District is unfair to vendors and to their customers. In my opinion, these regulations appear to be an attempt, as the saying goes, "to fix a problem that isn't broken". More importantly, in a city where there are more critical quality of life issues to regulate, food truck vendor locations simply do not merit this level of regulation.

The food truck phenomenon in Washington continues to be an important player in promoting the city as a vibrant and energetic foodie destination. As a food truck patron, I am delighted by the range of food choices which are less than 10 minutes away from my office. On any given day, I can have spicy tacos or a tall bowl of pho from a food truck only a few minutes walk from my office. However, the requirements of the new regulations would eliminate all of the food truck parking locations closest to my office. As a result, every truck I visit would lose my business as a customer along with hundreds of others.

As a general rule, I have found both the food truck vendors and my fellow patrons are mindful of others walking on the sidewalk. Have you received any complaints about egress issues? It would be helpful to understand why the city government has used egress issues as their primary impetus to create these new regulations. If the proposed regulations go forward, I believe that the DC government would also send a critical message to small business entrepreneurs: The District of Columbia is not a small business friendly environment.

Finally, at some point, some of the current vendors may wish to expand their operations to a brick and mortar location. When they do, I am certain that the District of Columbia would like to be the first choice location for those new restaurants. In my opinion, the proposed vendor regulations would mark yet another step to cause those entrepreneurs to think about a location outside of the city instead.

I implore you to withdraw the proposed DC Vending Regulations.

Sincerely,  
Jacqueline Wright

The growth of the food truck community also demonstrates the city's support of small business entrepreneurs.