

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 Brian Farrell and I am the owner of Basil Thyme LLC - which runs Basil Thyme! and now, Basil Thyme's Two trucks. We've been operating in DC since June 2011 as a From-Scratch Italian food business. All the pasta noodles, sauces, nine gourmet lasagnas, cannolis and even the salad dressing - are all made by us each day. We work from 5am to 5pm most days, just to provide lunch Monday through Friday.

We're a real business that works extremely hard. We're even ranked among the top three Italian *Restaurants* in DC on Yelp [www.yelp.com/c/dc/italian](http://www.yelp.com/c/dc/italian). Now, to be clear - *I know we're not*; I wouldn't disrespect them to suggest that we are. But I mention it because it's interesting. I think it's a strong statement of how our customers perceive the quality and care we, and frankly many other "2.0" food trucks - put into our food, and the high service-levels we strive to provide DC workers and residents alike, and the hard work we put into our business. Frankly, we work our tails off and quite literally don't stop moving all day unless seated in the truck driving to/from our location.

We employ five people currently and are adding a sixth person next week. As you can see from the dynamic results of several of our friends from other food trucks, this business is an entry-way for folks - to take a passion and dedication to quality goods and services - to start a business from the ground up, and grow it into something that not only provides an excellent meal option for folks who live and work in DC - but also helps contribute jobs to DC residents and expand the tax base.

I'm actually starting to lose off-hand count of how many of my fellow food truckers are taking their efforts and applying their success to start brick and mortar businesses here in DC: Takorean and DC Empanadas - at the up and coming Union Market, District Taco opening this spring on Barracks Row and PORC opening Kangaroo Boxing Club - are the first several I can think of.

A fellow trucker friend and I visited Pleasant Pops, at their new brick and mortar - who have a great farm-to-table and earth friendly model, that offer great sandwiches and desserts right there in Adams Morgan. Their store is extremely nice. I'd suggest you visit it - over by 18th St, just a block or two past Loriel Restaurant, underneath "Mint" - and see what these guys have pulled off, starting with just a truck. I know it's something that I would love to do myself. It sounds corny to say, but it's 100% true:

when we visited Brian and Rodger's kitchen, all we could do was complement them (several times) on the fantastic looking result of what all we could imagine must have been a TON of hard work, a labor of love - and in the back of my head, was the often repeated: "Man, I'd love to build something like this someday." I know my friend felt the same. To see it happen for them, was pretty profound for us. And I think it's something that many, if not all, of the trucks aspire to.

One of our friends Stephan Boillon who owns El Floridano truck and soon now Mothership Restaurant - has worked probably the better part of a year doing 100+ hour weeks, to start his brick and mortar restaurant on Georgia Ave. I can't wait to see what happens there. I can tell you this, when we all do walk in the door, it will be amazing for us to see what he's brought to life.

The same was true with Kangaroo Boxing Club.. you should have seen the smile - the look of absolutely *appropriate* pride on his face as Josh Saltzman greeted us at brand new restaurant and we ordered, sitting down, from his menu. Josh spent months and months making that happen. The place was packed to the gills. I must have nodded 100 times, thinking to myself how awesome a task it must have been, all the work, all the time - doing much of it himself. I was all the more impressed because I knew it wasn't old money - someone who was handed 300K from daddy - I knew he worked his butt off and had to earn - tooth and nail - every last buck that went into the place and that it was blood sweat and tears. Good for you Josh, I thought, Good for you!

Food truckers are hard working entrepreneurs. We started with self-funded dreams - there sure aren't any banks giving loans to food businesses less than 2 years old, or they certainly weren't in 2010 when I liquidated my 401K to take a white postal truck and turn it into Basil Thyme. I was on such a thin dime to make this happen, I actually drove 4 hours, down to the North Carolina border to stay each week Monday through Friday, and lived with my fabricator - Ray and his wife- during those days.

I helped install every piece of steel, the plumbing, the generator slides and 98% of everything inside the truck with him along side him, so as to save on cost and make it even feasible. ( You'd be surprised just how heavy holding a 1/16" of an inch thick piece stainless steel piece 4'x8' over your head is while someone else driving 6 screws in to secure it. 3 times) About the only thing I didn't help him with, was installing the breaker box/electrical, which I knew better than to try to get involved in.

I took 250 hours approximately to sand the outside of the truck down to bear metal , that I swirl patterned 100% myself, with a drill and sandpaper attachment, because I couldn't afford a nice 'wrap'. I hoped people would forgive the look of the truck and get the subtle message that the food is from "scratch". Sometimes, I think my fiancée was at her wit's end when I'd have to stay through the weekend too, just to finish a particular section of work. She'd sometimes drive down, to visit for the day, so that I could more easily stay and keep working.

I know this letter doesn't touch at all on the regs, because I wanted you to understand the effort we put in to make our businesses happen. So I'll keep it short: The regs, as written are a business killer for me. Creating these ill-conceived zones and limiting the parking as prescribed, would absolutely eviscerate my business. I'll let the others describe the logistics as to why that is, but change in the wrong direction that might impact my numbers by even 10 percent, would seriously threaten our existence. One iota beyond that, I'd be done.

I can tell you this - despite a strong reputation, Basil Thyme's not "killing it". Over \$1000 a day between food and staff costs alone for one truck, (not to mention kitchen rental, insurance, gas...) mean lean numbers. Rainy days are a real bummer ,and are often a loss. Ditto that for cold and windy. We depend on high-volume, high-traffic areas to make the numbers work. Without it, we're toast. As Written, These regs kill those high traffic areas for us, or create a 'Hunger Games' scarcity to the viable spots as to have food trucks cannibalizing each other for the spots, which sound to be halved, or worse. In my view, I hope they are seriously revised and help us maintain status quo, as far as where we can park. If these regs aren't DOA as is... than we are.

Thanks for your time and I can't stress enough - go seek out one of our fellow food-trucks turned brick and mortar and see what they've done. Don't kill our businesses, enable consumer choice and help them to grow - and see what can and already has happened for these hard working entrepreneurs.

Sincerely,

Brian Farrell

Owner, Basil Thyme  
Basil Thyme LLC.