

CITY COUNCIL
CONSENT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 17, 2009

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE BAN ON FOIE GRAS
PRODUCTION

INITIATED BY: MAYOR PRO TEMPORE ABBE LAND
(Corri Planck, Council Deputy) *CP*

COUNCILMEMBER JOHN J. DURAN
(Hernan Molina, Council Deputy) *Hm*

(Elias Valencia, Council Intern)

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will consider adopting a resolution in support of the ban on the practice of force-feeding ducks and geese for the production of foie gras.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Adopt Resolution 09-372 "A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD IN SUPPORT OF THE BAN ON FOIE GRAS PRODUCTION"
- 2) Direct staff to send copies of signed resolution to California State Senator Fran Pavley, Assemblymember Mike Feuer, Animal Protection and Rescue League, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, The Humane Society of the United States, and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.
- 3) Direct staff to contact restaurants and grocery stores that sell foie gras informing them of SB1520 soon to be in effect and to consider removing foie gras from their menus before the law takes place.

BACKGROUND ANALYSIS:

In 2004, Gov. Schwarzenegger signed SB 1520 ban both the production and sale of force fed foie gras in California by 2012. Although it will be mandatory to have foie gras out of California in three years, it would keep with city policies, especially as an animal cruelty free zone, to support the ban and to have as many local restaurants and grocery stores voluntarily pull the product from their menus so once the bill comes into effect, there will be less opposition against it.

Many places across the nation, including San Diego have already voluntarily taken foie gras off their menus, and some Whole Foods Market's have also agreed to stop selling foie gras.

Foie gras literally means "fatty liver" in French. Considered by some to be a delicacy, foie gras is produced by forcing a long metal pipe down the throats of ducks and geese and force-feeding them massive amounts of grain, resulting in their livers swelling to up to 10 times their normal size.

To produce it, young ducks or geese have over four pounds of corn mush forced down their throats through a long metal pipe. The process is repeated two or three times daily for two to three weeks until they can barely move and are on the verge of organ rupture and death. For a 150 pound human, this would be equivalent to 60 pounds of food per day. The birds are then slaughtered to produce foie gras.

A Zogby International poll conducted in 2004 revealed that 77% of American adults agreed that force-feeding ducks and geese in order to produce foie gras should be banned by law in the United States. Foies gras has been banned in at least 15 countries and is considered inherently cruel by virtually all animal protection groups.

West Hollywood has continuously had a strong involvement with animal rights issues. As an animal-cruelty free zone, the City has made it known that pets have guardians and not owners. In 2003 the City passed an ordinance prohibiting the de-clawing of domestic animals and continues to fight for the quality of animal life.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020:

Strategic Goal: Human Services and Quality of life – Support legislation and policies that improve animal welfare.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

Office of Mayor Pro Tempore Abbe Land and the Office of Councilmember John J. Duran

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

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RESOLUTION NO. 09-~~NNNN~~

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD IN SUPPORT OF
THE CRUEL BAN ON FORCE FED FOIE GRAS
PRODUCTION

WHEREAS, foie gras is produced through the inhumane practice of force-feeding ducks and geese massive amounts of food to eventually yield a liver ten times its normal size; and

WHEREAS, foie gras is recognized as inherently cruel by virtually all animal protection groups including the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), and the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals; and

WHEREAS, foie gras has been banned in 15 countries and many cities across the nation have stepped up to voluntarily stop selling the product; and

WHEREAS, effective in 2012, SB 1520 signed by Governor Schwarzenegger, will make it illegal to sell or produce foie gras in California; and

WHEREAS, West Hollywood remains committed to being an animal-cruel free zone indicated by the passage of its ban on de-clawing domesticated animals in 2003 and continued support of legislation promoting a better quality of life for animals:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of West Hollywood supports the ban on foie gras, and encourages the residents and businesses of West Hollywood to avoid purchasing and supporting this extreme form of animal cruelty.