



TESTIMONY

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FOOD TRUCKS IN LADUE

By Corianna Baier

Testimony Before the Ladue City Council at the Public Hearing for the Amendment to the Ladue Zoning Ordinance Regarding Mobile Food Vendors

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:

My name is Corianna Baier. I am an analyst at the Show-Me Institute. The Show-Me Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan Missouri based think tank that supports free market solutions for state and local policy. The ideas presented herein are my own and summarize research regarding mobile food vendors.

I would like to commend the council for recognizing the increasing supply and demand for mobile food vendors, or food trucks, in our communities. The food truck industry reports sales of over a billion dollars annually and was particularly well equipped to navigate the social distancing and shutdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ I support actions that

¹ Andrew W. Hait. "Fast-Growing Food truck Industry Can Operate Amid COVID-19 Social Distancing Rules, No Indoor Seating Orders." *United States Census Bureau*. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/09/food-trucks-one-way-to-eat-out-during-pandemic.html>

give food trucks the freedom to operate within Ladue. However, I hope that the council recognizes that the amendment under consideration is an extremely small step toward accepting and encouraging these innovative businesses. The amendment discussed here is still overly restrictive and burdensome for food trucks.

In this amended ordinance, food trucks will only be allowed to operate at approved special events with a specific vendor license. This is, of course, on top of licensing and registration required by St. Louis County. These restrictions significantly hinder opportunities for food trucks in Ladue—not only making it harder for these businesses to succeed, but also limiting options for consumers. In addition, this amendment only allows for one food truck at events on private residential property, and these events will need special event approval if they have a food truck. This limitation seems arbitrary; organizers of these events should be able to support as many of

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these businesses as they want as long as traffic and safety concerns are addressed.

Cities, and the region as a whole, should encourage entrepreneurship as way of promoting growth and prosperity. As with brick-and-mortar businesses, more food trucks mean more jobs and more options for consumers.² I believe we need to give food trucks the freedom to meet the community's ever-increasing demand. I hope that this council considers greater steps forward in the future.

² "Food Trucks in the US – Employment Statistics 2005-2027".
<https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-statistics/employment/food-trucks-united-states/>



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