



HERB J. WESSON, JR.
COUNCILMEMBER, 10TH DISTRICT
PRESIDENT, LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

July 30, 2019

Mr. Jason Kow, Founder & CEO
Queensgate Investments LLP
8 Hill Street
London, W1J 5NG

Dear Mr. Kow:

The City of Los Angeles is aware of public reports that Queensgate Investments is in the process of acquiring the Freehand Hotel Los Angeles. If this reported sale goes forward, we hope that your firm will contribute to the vitality of our thriving economy as a new corporate citizen in our City.

As elected officials dedicated to the public's wellbeing, however, news of the potential sale does raise concerns regarding the continuity of the hotel's workforce. There have been instances in which changes in the corporate ownership or management of a hotel has resulted in mass layoffs of hotel workers, as the hotel's new owner or operator have declined to retain existing workers. Such mass layoffs harm not only the individual workers and their families who lose their livelihoods, but also place burdensome demands on the City and other local governments for social services to address the impacts of worker displacement and resulting unemployment.

In light of these concerns, I write as President of the Los Angeles City Council to ask that your company commit to maintaining the current workforce in the event that you assume ownership of the property. As the hotel's success to date attests, the current workforce has demonstrated itself highly capable. Maintaining the hotel's workers will contribute to the hotel's continued success. At the same time, it will demonstrate respect for the largely immigrant women workforce that is the backbone of our City's hospitality sector and contribute to the stability and health of Los Angeles's economy.

Additionally, as you are likely aware, workers at the Freehand Los Angeles have alleged that the hotel's current operator has failed to provide them with a dignified work environment. These allegations include a pending lawsuit brought by a housekeeping employee alleging that she was made to clean men's restrooms without an effective means of preventing male guests from entering and urinating in front of her and a pending Cal/OSHA complaint filed by another housekeeping employee alleging that he was made to clean up sewage water following overflows from a basement cistern without adequate training or protective equipment. If your company takes over the property, we hope and expect that you will ensure that workers are provided the dignity and respect that all workers deserve.

Sincerely,



HERB J. WESSON, JR.

President, Los Angeles City Council