

My name is Stephen Adelson and I own Carnivore BBQ. We currently have two DC Food Trucks with a third to be inspected by DCRA and Health Dept this week. We expect the third truck to be serving by the end of this week.

I will address your specific provisions but wanted to give you a little background on me and my business. I employ approximately twelve full time people in this start-up business. I started this business because I researched the opportunity and decided to invest.

Before putting more than \$150,000 of my own money on the line, I analyzed the size of the customer base, the available locations, the competition, the costs, and my competitive strengths and weaknesses.

I moved forward and finally have succeed to the point where I pay my employees a living wage (where they had little or none before), have a loyal following of satisfied customers, and am just starting to make enough money to pay back my debts and help support my family.

What you are proposing is an exogenous variable that I could not foresee and amounts to a “taking” of my business by legislative fiat.

While your goals to create more equitable use of the roads and sidewalks are laudable, your methods are flawed.

521.1 (d) (1). 10 Foot Side Walk Rule.

You said that this rule is consistent with Brick & Mortar Rules for sidewalk seating. Food Trucks do not set permanent seating/ obstructions and therefore are not comparable to outdoor cafés. We serve lunch primarily between the hours of noon and 2pm. Between the cops on the beat and the threat of shutting us down if we cause obstructions to side walk pedestrians; you don’t need any more rules on this issue. Moreover, limiting the number of available spaces will actually do more to block existing sidewalks because the same number of customers will visit fewer trucks on a block and cause more congestion then simply leaving the existing rules in place.

Part 4

529.2. Obtain the 3 month Temp MRV permit. I serve from noon to 2 pm. I work when I choose to make money and I go where the money is. Often times due to weather and other business commitments, I choose to not use parking.

Why should I be forced to purchase a 4 hour permit? I should pay for parking when I need parking.

530.2 MRV. You are putting my livelihood in your hands. It should be in the public (customers') hands. MRV with the right to park in meter spaces would be appropriate. MRV is simply a back-handed way of putting Food Trucks out of business. During our discussions with your staff, you stated that you would create enough MRV's for all food trucks. The food trucks would simply search Washington DC to find the open MRV space. This isn't free enterprise. What you are suggesting is communism.

There is a reason why Food Trucks want to park in certain areas—that's called capitalism. Here is a perspective on what you are suggesting. I have a parking garage, it's 25 miles square (the size of Washington DC). I'm going to sell you a parking space and one hundred of your friends parking spaces (food truck operators). You can park anywhere within the 25,000 parking spaces that I have dispersed throughout the garage as long as it is a space designated as MRV. It's first come, first serve. Good Luck locating your parking space. It should only take 24 hours to locate your available parking spot.

While the above sounds ridiculous to anyone who wants to pay for parking so they can go to work, it is, in fact, exactly what you are trying to put into law. It doesn't do what you intend the rule to do, unless your intent is to put me out of business.

Rule 531.1

This rule (the existing rule) is sufficient for Food Trucks. It's the rule I was given when I made my financial decision to start a food truck business in DC.

If you want to address the over-crowding issue of food trucks, do what they do in NYC for cabs. Put a temporary moratorium on the number of Food Truck permits. This would be fair. It would ensure that there would be no more food trucks on the road. It would give the public the options they desire. It would protect my investment. It would allow existing operators to sell their permit to a business with a better plan (that's called free enterprise).

If you really must do the MRV, then do what the public clearly wants: Make all the zones you designated as MRV zones be used solely for Food Truck Parking from 11:30 to 2pm. Make it a no parking zone from 11-11:30. That way, you won't have runners (people that save parking for food trucks), you will have food trucks being able to do what they do and compete fairly for parking, and you will give the public what it wants—Food Truck Choices. Combine this idea with the Moratorium and you might have an equitable plan.

Anything less than the idea of making whole sections of the city open only to food trucks with a Temporary Moratorium on New Trucks amounts to a "Taking" and is in direct opposition to the will of the public.

Young, educated professionals are creating “The Renaissance of the District.” Food Trucks appeal to this demographic. This is the demographic that spends money in the District and creates the tax base the District needs to thrive.

Your proposed rules will put me out of business, will put off that demographic that keeps the city alive and growing, and will have a chilling effect on the creative spirit that makes DC great.

Sincerely,

Stephen Adelson

Carnivore BBQ (carnbbq.com)