



DAVID E. RYU
COUNCILMEMBER, FOURTH DISTRICT

March 24, 2020

Michael Shull
General Manager
Department of Recreation & Parks
221 N Figueroa St, 3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Runyon Closure During COVID-19

Dear General Manager Shull,

One of the important components of both the City's Safer at Home order and the State's Stay Home order is social distancing. In order for these orders to work and for us to stop the spread of Coronavirus, public health officials stress that people should only leave their homes when necessary, and maintain at least six feet of distance between one another.

This past weekend, though, we saw many images of crowds in public spaces – beaches, hiking trails and more. This was what led Mayor Garcetti to close beach parking lots and Governor Newsom to close State Park parking lots, which I support.

However, it is not just beaches that are seeing crowds of people. Runyon Canyon Park and Lake Hollywood Park have seen crowds of visitors so large on recent weekends that it makes safe physical distancing impossible.

In order to maintain public health, and in line with the social distancing recommendations from health officials, I believe we must close Runyon Canyon Park and Lake Hollywood Park on weekends.

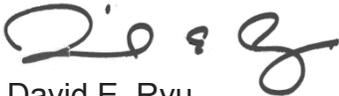
Making this request pains me greatly. I grew up in a two-bedroom apartment off the 101 Freeway, and our City's parks were my only access to outdoor space. As you know, I have been a long-standing champion for parks and open space, and have prioritized park access as chair of the City Council Committee on Parks. However, after discussing the matter with public health experts, I believe this is a necessary step.

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For weekdays, public safety personnel have been monitoring social distancing in the park and reported that current weekday levels have been reasonable and social distancing has been observed. However, as Public Safety personnel and park staff continue to monitor these two parks, if that changes the department should review full closure.

Weekend closures of these parks would follow orders to close beach parking lots, as well as beach parking lot closures by the City of Santa Monica, and trail closures by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and Los Angeles County. I don't make this recommendation easily, but closing Runyon Canyon Park on weekends, when we have seen the highest volume of visitors, should follow to keep everyone safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. E. Ryu', written in a cursive style.

David E. Ryu
Councilmember, District Four

CC:

Mayor Eric Garcetti
Michel Moore, Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department
Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health