



Council Members

Kimberly Acosta
CTCORE—Organize Now!

Raven Blake
LoveFed New Haven Initiative

Austin Bryniarski
Community Representative

Mark Firla
Community Representative

Richard Furlow
Aldermanic Representative

Susan Harris
Witnesses to Hunger

Kimberly Hart
Community Representative

Alycia Santilli
CARE

New Haven

Food Policy Council
817 Grand Avenue, No. 101
New Haven, CT 06511
203-500-2118
nhfoodpolicycouncil.org

New Haven Food Policy Council

Better Food for a Better City

March 21, 2019

Legislation Committee

New Haven Board of Alders

Testimony Supporting “MICRO-FOOD BUSINESS ORDINANCE”

The New Haven Food Policy Council supports the passage of the micro-food business ordinance, per a vote at our meeting yesterday on March 20. This ordinance creates a scale-appropriate pricing structure for permitting and also eliminates redundancies in the regulatory process of inspecting commercial kitchens that are already licensed and inspected. This ordinance has the potential to both break down barriers to food-based entrepreneurship in the Elm City and also save the City of New Haven time and money in preventing overregulating kitchen spaces that are already up to snuff. In case it needs clarifying, this ordinance importantly does *not* allow small-scale food-based businesses to skirt health department regulations, and these small businesses would still be subject to ensuring and maintaining proper food-handling and sanitation practices. For these reasons, the Council supports this innovative and important legislation.

As we put our support behind this ordinance, **we also want to recognize that there is still room for improvement to make the ordinance stronger**. Echoing the concerns of the Food Systems Policy Division, omissions of this ordinance would have benefitted from discussion with relevant City departments, including the Food Systems Policy Division. For example, the Zoning department in recent days suggested that language around allowed hours of operation for a small food-based business would be worthwhile to incorporate; language could be tailored to more specifically define what a micro-food business is, like a revenue cut-off of \$250,000; and questions of who would be held liable in the case of an accident (the subleasing micro-business, or the commercial kitchen operator?) remain unaddressed.

Whether these issues are addressed before the ordinance is passed, are passed as an amendment to this ordinance at a later date, or are incorporated as a part of the enforcement of this ordinance in the absence legislative action, **the Council looks forward to working with alders, legislative staff, and the Food Systems Policy Division to ensure that this ordinance is as strong as it can be**. Other cities, like Bridgeport and the food policy council there, are already looking at New Haven’s proposed ordinance so that they may pass a version in their jurisdiction, so as other municipalities look to New Haven as a model for food-based businesses, it is important that the food policies we pass are held to the highest standard. That being said, the Council will support efforts to craft sound food policy into the future; **please don’t hesitate to reach out to the Council should you be considering future policies related to food system0s**.

To sum up, **the Council supports this legislation**. I look forward to being in touch with each of you regarding summer meals programming for 2019—and thank you for your time.

Austin Bryniarski
Chair
New Haven Food Policy Council