



Mayor of Providence

Jorge O. Elorza

July 13, 2016

Honorable Members
Providence City Council
City Hall

Dear Honorable Members:

Pursuant to Section 302(b) of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, as amended, and Public Law, Chapter 45-50, Sections 1 through 31 passed in 1987, and Providence Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2007-51, Ordinance No. 504, I am this day appointing David Veliz, of 111 Glover Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02908, to the Environmental Sustainability Task Force. Mr. Veliz will replace Carissa Richard who has resigned.

Sincerely,

Jorge O. Elorza
Mayor

IN CITY COUNCIL
SEP 01 2016

READ
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

CLERK

David Veliz

I am fortunate to have been a community organizer and activist for almost 20 years and have been able to work on several environmental and social justice campaigns. As a person of color myself, who has always lived in poor and underrepresented communities, I know the work that we still have to do to address economic, health and environmental inequity.

Please Identify one critical environmental sustainability issue facing Providence and describe how the city should be working to address it.

An environmental issue that I really care about and have seen the impacts that addressing it has had on large urban communities, is the issue of accessible and sustainable green and open spaces. Although Providence is known for its beautiful green neighborhoods, there are still communities that per capita do not have adequate green and open spaces. There are several initiatives that have and could continue to help address this issue such as, building more community parks, green streets and community gardens which would address the issues of access to healthy foods by creating a space for sustainable agriculture. There are organizations that are currently doing this work in Providence which could be resources for an expanding initiative. Adequate green spaces also address many other issues such as air pollution and the need for safe community spaces. Lastly, I would like to briefly talk about another issue that I care about. Through my work at CLAP I have been working on the issue of childhood lead poisoning which is prevalent in Rhode Island with higher rates in urban cities like Providence. Although Providence is a model and leader on how to address the lead poisoning issue, we still see higher rates of lead poisoning than most other cities in the State. Last year almost 400 children were poisoned in Providence alone. This was 6.3 Percent of the children tested; the highest percentage in the state. Although we use Providence as an example of what cities should be doing in regards to enforcement of lead laws and poisoning prevention, we still can do more to lower the rates and protect more children. Thank you for your time.