

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia, Arroyo, Bok, Breadon, Campbell, Edwards, Essaibi-George, Flaherty, Flynn, O'Malley Wu and Janey



**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**

**ORDER FOR A HEARING ON EXPANDING ACCESS FOR
MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES INTO HIGH-VOLUME
COMMERCIAL CENTERS**

- WHEREAS,** The phenomenon of “Shopping while Black” in Boston has been well documented, with an op-ed published in the Boston Globe and the Boston City Council filing a hearing order on the subject shortly after; however, there is reason to examine the barriers put in place not just for consumers of color, but to business owners of color as well; *and*
- WHEREAS,** While the bulk of black and brown businesses have traditionally been centered in neighborhoods like Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, and East Boston, every neighborhood benefits from a diverse pool of diverse business enterprises; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The history of residential segregation in Boston has played a major role in the location and success of many black and brown-owned businesses in the city today; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In some of Boston’s most famous and storied commercial centers, like the Seaport, Newbury Street, and Faneuil Hall Marketplace, there is an opportunity to look into ways to make those high-volume commercial centers more accessible to entrepreneurs of color; *and*
- WHEREAS,** By means of example, Faneuil Hall has suffered as a result of the pandemic, and the much-appreciated businesses need support through this time. There is an opportunity to revive that business community through investing in black and brown businesses; however, in order to do so, historic emotional barriers such as the idea of setting up shop in an area named after a slave-holder need to be addressed; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Reckoning with Boston’s economic barriers for entrepreneurs of color means reckoning with the symbolism of the institutions they are trying to emerge into; *and*

WHEREAS,

We have a responsibility as a city to end the us vs. them mentality and build relationships and communities that value and validate the experiences of entrepreneurs of color; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED,

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss expanding access for Minority Business Enterprises in high-volume commercial centers. Representatives from the administration, including the Office of Economic Development as well as advocates from the New Democracy Coalition of Massachusetts, BECMA, and others are invited to take part. Community activists and members of the public are also encouraged to attend virtually.

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