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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND BACP INTRODUCE MOBILE MERCHANT LICENSE TO
SUPPORT INNOVATIVE BUSINESS TYPES**

*New ordinance would create permanent license for innovative entrepreneurs;
Legislation would also expand operating time for food trucks*

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) today introduced an ordinance to create a permanent license for mobile merchants. Currently operating under a temporary Emerging Business Permit, entrepreneurs that sell non-food merchandise from within a mobile vehicle will now have a permanent licensing category under which to operate. This represents the Mayor's latest efforts to support innovative business types and creative owners.

"The mobile merchant license will provide innovative opportunities for new and existing business owners, bring retail options to new communities and complement existing brick and mortar stores on retail corridors," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Mobile merchants add vibrancy to commercial corridors and we are excited to welcome these entrepreneurs into Chicago permanently."

"At BACP, we are committed to opening doors for small businesses and adapting our regulations to fit a changing economy," said BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno. "There is room in Chicago for all types of businesses and this permanent license demonstrates our inclusivity, flexibility and willingness to listen."

Under the proposed ordinance, mobile merchant operators will be able to obtain a \$250, two-year license from BACP. This renewable license will allow operators to sell retail goods from within a mobile vehicle between 6:00am and 10:00 pm from a legal parking spot. To encourage the business activity, mobile merchants will be allowed to operate for four hours at one location under the license, subject to posted parking regulations, up from the two-hour limit in the current Emerging Business Permit.

"At the Illinois Restaurant Association, we believe in promoting and supporting all members of the culinary industry, from established brick-and-mortars to food



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trucks to everything in between,” said President and CEO of the Illinois Restaurant Association Sam Toia. “By expanding operating hours for food trucks, Chicago is encouraging innovation while balancing the interests of both food trucks and restaurants.”

To align with the proposed regulations for mobile merchants, the Mayor’s ordinance also expands the operating time frame for food trucks from the current two-hour limit to allow for continuous operations in the same location for up to four hours at a time, subject to posted parking regulations. This modification came about due to regular conversations with the food truck industry, restaurant groups and other stakeholders.

“As Chairman of the City Council License & Consumer Protection Committee and Alderman of the 37th Ward, I am a fervent believer in building regulations that support innovative and experimental businesses,” said 37th Ward Alderman Emma Mitts. “I thank Mayor Lightfoot and BACP for recognizing the contributions of these inventive entrepreneurs and creating a permanent license that supports our creative business owners.”

The Emerging Business Permit allows for emerging and innovative business concepts that fall outside of BACP’s traditional regulatory structure to safely operate on a pilot basis. Mobile Merchants were originally licensed under this Permit in 2016, with the four current permits set to expire at the end of January 2020.

“I am proud to embrace innovation in the 7th Ward and throughout Chicago,” said 7th Ward Alderman Gregory Mitchell. “I have seen firsthand how these Mobile Merchants have contributed to the commercial corridors in my ward and I’m excited to welcome them permanently into Chicago.”

“Through the Emerging Business Permit, the City allowed me to operate my business under a pilot program instead of turning me away,” said Juana Ryan, owner of StellaLily. “I am excited for the opportunity to operate under a permanent license and want to thank Mayor Lightfoot and BACP for expanding the operating hours to make it easier for me to succeed.”

This new license is the latest in Mayor Lightfoot’s ongoing efforts to reduce red tape and improve services for small businesses. As part of the 2020 Budget, five Regional Small Business Centers will be established to provide residents with easy access to business licensing support and information in their communities. Furthermore, starting March 1, 2020, the Fast-Track Business Sign Program will remove barriers to obtaining a sign permit by allowing businesses to apply for a basic on-premise signs at the same time as their business license.



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