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**MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES NEW MOBILE MERCHANT LICENSE CATEGORY TO SUPPORT INNOVATE BUSINESS TYPES**

*New license allows innovative businesses into the current license structure*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today proposed a new Mobile Merchant license under the Regulated Business License for the City's growing mobile boutique industry. This is the latest move to support Chicago's innovation economy and continues to create innovative business regulations that allow new and emerging businesses to launch and grow when activities don't yet fall under the current license structure.

"As the economy changes and new business structures emerge, we must continue to innovate to allow them to not only launch safely but thrive," said Mayor Emanuel. "Whether it's in the sharing economy or the growing mobile boutique industry, Chicago wants to continue to be the place where entrepreneurs can continue to find new business models where they find success and grow their businesses."

The Mobile Merchant license would allow mobile boutique operators, who currently operate under the Emerging Business Permit, to receive a renewable two-year license within BACP's license structure. The new license activity offers more flexibility in allowing the sales of non-food merchandise from a mobile vehicle.

"We are committed to doing everything we can to help Chicago's small businesses thrive. This new license activity resulted directly from allowing businesses that would otherwise not be allowed to operate to do so under a pilot program. The success is two-fold: these operators will now fit within our licensing structure, and other innovative and emerging businesses will hopefully be encouraged to come to Chicago and operate under our Emerging Business Permit," said BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno.

The Emerging Business Permit was created in 2012 as part of Mayor Emanuel's License Reform initiative, which simplified the licensing process for business owners by consolidating from 117 to 40 license types. The EBP was conceived to allow emerging and innovative that fall outside of the traditional licensing structure to safely operate on an experimental basis. The permit gives entrepreneurs the chance to test their unique business ideas for up to two-years while the City works to identify the necessary license framework.

Mobile boutique trucks are a growing niche in the Chicago area. In 2016, BACP was approached by several boutique owners who wanted to sell retail clothing, shoes, handbags, and art inspired gifts

from mobile vehicles. This activity did not fit into any existing category, so the City granted these Emerging Business Permits to allow these owners to operate for two years.

43rd Ward Alderman Michele Smith is a co-sponsor of the new ordinance and sees it as a boost to small business; "This ordinance will make it possible for new merchants like North and Hudson to test their concepts, and like them, grow to brick and mortar. In a time when so much local retail has been threatened by ecommerce, this is one step to nurture local business."

The first Emerging Business permit was issued to North & Hudson for mobile boutique operation. StellaLily was the second licensed mobile truck operator. To date, there are seven mobile boutique trucks operating under an EBP. These permits are set to expire in June. Under the proposed ordinance, these entrepreneurs would be eligible to continue their business activity under the Mobile Merchant license.

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