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L.A. City Attorney Drafts Law to Ban Private Prisons; Public Hearing Nov. 12

The City Attorney's Office Monday released a draft ordinance to prohibit the operation and construction of private prisons in Los Angeles, after a proposal was put forward by Councilman Herb Wesson last year. The ordinance would also ban the operation and establishment of privately owned detention facilities that hold unaccompanied immigrant minors. "Profiting off of locking people up will not fly in Los Angeles," Wesson said last year when he introduced his motion. "This industry is an equal partner in the Trump administration's cruel treatment of immigrant children and families, and the mass incarceration of communities of color. We call on every city and county to join us in preventing this kind of activity from operating within their borders." The ordinance is slated to be adopted quickly, as Wesson stated that the effects on detainees at privately owned prisons and unaccompanied minor immigrant detention facilities was "well documented" in a temporary ordinance the council passed earlier this year. That temporary ordinance, which put a stop to the operation and establishment of the immigrant detention facilities, is set to expire in February. According to the Department of City Planning, staff will be available during scheduled virtual office hours to answer questions and will also host a public hearing at 5:30 p.m. Nov. 12 to receive public comments, which they will incorporate into the staff recommendation report to the City Planning Commission in December.