

PUBLIC COMMENT
BEFORE THE
LOMPOC CITY COUNCIL

July 6, 2020

Honorable Mayor and Members of Council:

On July 4, 2020, our city's citizens shared in our national observance of Independence Day. Although circumstances limited the celebratory activities normally enjoyed in our city, it was marred by numerous discharges of illegal fireworks. It happens every year at this time, but was especially serious this year. In our part of California where fire danger is high, this is simply unacceptable.

Lompoc has made it legally permissible for persons to discharge "safe and sane" fireworks in the city limits. It is my understanding that other varieties are *not* legal, with the exception of those professional-grade fireworks that may be discharged at City-operated events under supervision of the Fire Department. Thus, we must conclude we have much illegal activity in our midst.

Perhaps there are some who feel their liberty is being restricted by Lompoc's ordinances. As this holiday celebrates the founding of our great nation, we should reflect on the words of James Wilson, a signatory of both the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution: "Without law, liberty loses its nature and becomes licentiousness." The Founders of our nation never once believed in unrestricted freedom. Persons who wish to change Lompoc's laws and ordinances to suit their desires are free to try to do so through customary means, but they are not free to break our rules and behave however they choose.

It is indeed difficult to curb this growing problem; that much is clear. Perhaps amending the relevant ordinances to place considerable legal liability on the importers or manufacturers of fireworks considered illegal in Lompoc would be of some help.

At any rate, I look forward to a more celebratory Independence Day in our city next year, with a bright professional fireworks display by the City of Lompoc, and a notable absence of illegal fireworks. I appreciate your further consideration of this matter at an appropriate time.

Sincerely,



Timothy R Smith
Resident
Lompoc, California