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September 28, 2012

Santa Monica City Council  
1685 Main Street #209  
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Council Member:

I'm writing this letter in light of disturbing information regarding Dan and Jessica Rice that was released on the web several weeks ago. I learned that there was a possibility their application to renew the lease for "66 to Cali" on the pier may intentionally be rejected.

I can personally tell you that in the last 4 years I have been to the pier at least 3 times. While the ocean view and the sights and sounds of activity surrounding the pier are pretty cool, we Route 66 travelers come to see Dan and Jessica Rice. Route 66 draws hundreds of thousands of travelers from around the world every year. Navigating the last stretch through Los Angeles is a daunting task, but the promise of seeing the friendly faces at "66 to Cali" provides plenty of motivation to "Go all the way".

I've been fortunate to witness Dan and Jessica's efforts first hand. In December of 2010 I helped them push their old cart out to the pier. In addition to that I was interviewed by a local television newscaster on the pier. He asked why I was in SoCal all the way from St. Louis. I explained to him I was there because of Dan and Jessica Rice and their celebration of Route 66 at the end of the line. In the same trip I was asked to weigh in on deliberations regarding the future of "66 to Cali" and its future placement on the pier. Pier officials were trying to determine a static location for the vendor. The officials exhibited a genuine sense of involvement in the success of Dan and Jessica. So what has changed all of a sudden???? Are the allegations true?

These two people not only care about Route 66, and its people, but they take it a step further, making sure the merchandise they offer is of highest quality and made here on American soil. They are helping to keep our nation's economy going. In times like we are experiencing today, small American business needs all the help it can get. I've explored the pier and all of its wonderful sights and stores. But honestly, the average Route 66 tourist wants to purchase unique goods and souvenirs along his or her journeys. The other stores on the pier sell the same generic "Made in China" (or somewhere else), souvenirs that can be found in almost any route 66 stop stretching all the way back to Illinois.

Your City is blessed to have two young, energetic individuals that are single handedly bringing thousands of people to your city and to your seaside attractions. They don't need a plan on paper. They are exercising their plan for the travelers every day. They are offering a unique experience found no other place on the planet. They are stimulating interest in travel. They offer a level of expertise pertaining to Route 66 that is unfounded anywhere in the Los Angeles area. Dan and Jessica are **THE** welcoming wagon for the weary traveler. I encourage you to go sit on the pier on ANY given day, summer or winter; and observe how many people take photographs of or pose in front of the "End Of The Road" sign, or the 66 to Cali kiosk. If Dan and Jessica disappear from the pier I can guarantee that myself and many, many other tourists will lose motivation to make the trek all the way across San Bernardino County.... After all the reward will cease to exist.

One last note: I am a small business owner myself. I have a thriving construction company here in St. Louis that employs 12 hard working individuals and 2 dozen subcontractors. I get great feeling knowing that my efforts contribute to those families' well-being. I feel that greed is the #1 root of what's destroying our country. A respected competitor told me once, "There is enough sunshine here for everyone." This couldn't be more true in the case of 66 to Cali. Everyone, including other Route 66 vendors on the pier benefit from Dan and Jessica's involvement. I have even purchased items from the other stores including Route 66 vendors on the pier. Broaden your perspective on this situation and think about the big picture. Dan and Jessica are so much more than just two people selling "Stuff" out there at the seaside pier.

Sincerely,



Roamin' Rich Dinkela II  
Owner of Creve Coeur Paving  
St. Louis, Missouri

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