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## **Santiago, Huizar Pedestrian Protection Measure Passes Committee**

*Assemblymember Miguel Santiago works with LA City Councilmember José Huizar to address outdated crosswalk signal law that unfairly targets pedestrians in Downtown Los Angeles*

(Sacramento, CA) – Assembly Bill 390, authored by **Assemblymember Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles)**, was approved by the Assembly Transportation Committee today (13-1). The bill will protect pedestrians exploited by an outdated state crossing signal law that has resulted in people on foot being unfairly punished and financially overburdened.

Current state law was written when flashing red signals alone were instituted. As such, it does not appropriately reflect modern crossing signals, which now also include a countdown. As a result, it is currently illegal for a pedestrian to step into a crosswalk after the red hand starts flashing and the countdown begins *no matter how many seconds are left to cross*. AB 390 aims to correct that.

Assemblymember Santiago introduced the legislation after **Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar** authored a 2016 City Council resolution calling on the state to update crosswalk laws, which negatively impact pedestrians, particularly in Downtown Los Angeles. Residential population in Downtown L.A. has increased to more than 53,000 in recent years and through his DTLA Forward initiative, Huizar is actively working to increase and encourage more pedestrian activity – something he and Santiago both support.

“I don’t believe pedestrians should be preyed upon just to fill local coffers,” said Assemblymember Santiago. “AB 390 encourages and reinforces pedestrian-friendly communities like Downtown Los Angeles.”

According to *The Los Angeles Times*, more than 17,000 citations were issued during a four-year period to pedestrians who stepped off the curb when the red hand was flashing. A series of citation stings in Downtown Los Angeles led Huizar and Santiago to work together to address discrepancies within current law that unfairly punish pedestrians who otherwise are not exhibiting dangerous crosswalk practices.

“When current California pedestrian laws were created, countdown signals didn’t exist,” said Councilmember Huizar. “As a result, there has been a lot of confusion about when a pedestrian can cross the street in Downtown Los Angeles and throughout the city. I want to thank Assemblymember Santiago for answering the call of our resolution and proposing common sense updates to this code in order to encourage more pedestrian activity, while ensuring public safety.”

AB 390 offers a solution by making it legal for a pedestrian to proceed walking across a crosswalk during a countdown signal if there is sufficient time to reasonably complete the crossing safely.

According to Assemblymember Santiago, other states and cities have passed similar legislation without opposition. There is no evidence of an increase in risky behavior from pedestrians as a result of these newer laws.

This week, the Los Angeles City Council will vote on a second resolution by Councilmember Huizar supporting AB 390 specifically. AB 390 will next head to the Assembly Floor for a vote in the coming weeks.

*Assemblymember Miguel Santiago is the Chair of the Assembly’s Communications and Conveyance Committee. He represents the 53rd District composed of the cities of Los Angeles, Huntington Park, and Vernon.*

*Councilmember José Huizar represents Council District 14 in the City of Los Angeles, which includes Downtown Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, El Sereno and Northeast Los Angeles.*

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