

ALLIANCE PARTNERS

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May 6, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento CA 95814

Re: A California Recovery for All

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the more than 55 progressive organizations that make up the Building the California Dream Alliance, we thank you for your clear and effective leadership during this time of crisis. Your quick action has saved countless lives and, even as needed public health measures remain in place, we are now at a point where we can begin to think about the future.

While we know the outcomes could have been far worse if not for California's bold and early actions, we can't ignore that the Covid-19 emergency is laying bare the structural inequities that have long plagued our communities. Our current economic system, which benefits a select few, is broken. Our safety net is far too thin to protect the most vulnerable Californians in the best of times, much less to cushion millions of families on the margins from a nuclear-level economic fallout.

This pandemic has only amplified our already unacceptable, destructive legacy of structural racism and inequality. The death toll -- disproportionately people of color -- has exposed the inevitable consequences of unequal access to affordable health care and the social determinants of health. It has laid bare the consequences of decades of inattention to inequality in housing, our environment, quality childcare and education.

We are encouraged by positive trends in COVID-19 hospitalizations and a reduction in lives lost each today. However, we know that without employing the kind of bold action California has taken to flatten the curve, our state's human toll of poverty, hunger, and lack of opportunity will persist throughout our lifetimes and crush the dreams of our next generation.

Having "met the moment," Californians must now take the opportunity to enact transformational reforms that eradicate the diseases of racism, inequity, and exclusion that leave people, as well as our government and economy, vulnerable to future natural and economic disasters.

First, we must be bold and ambitious in providing immediate relief to millions of Californians impacted by the disaster. Second we must be focused and assertive in charting a course for long-term recovery that allows every Californian to thrive.

Below you will find a set of principles and policy priorities that this Alliance has adopted that begin the groundwork for doing just this. Our hope is that you will join us to ensure a Recovery for All so that we can work together to truly build a California for all.

Healthcare and Housing for all people, with no exceptions.

Health Care: Expand Medi-Cal for all eligible seniors, regardless of immigration status.

Health Care: Increase state subsidies for Covered California.

Health Care: Enact AB 1611 (Chiu) which would ban surprise emergency room billing by preventing surprise bills for out-of-network hospital ER visits so consumers are only billed for their in-network co-pay or deductible, and setting a fair provider payment standard.

Healthcare: Clarify that reproductive and sexual health services including abortion, gender-affirming care, sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, and family planning are essential healthcare that cannot be delayed. In addition, remove cost-sharing for these essential services.

Healthcare: Remove physician supervision for certified nurse midwives to increase access to high-quality, high-value maternity care, reduce race-based disparities in maternal outcomes, and bring California in line with the 46 other states that all do not require physician supervision for certified nurse midwives.

Housing: Forgive unpaid rent accrued by low income households during the crisis. Establish a relief fund for nonprofit housing developers and needy landlords who's lost rental incomes would otherwise put their business at risk. Eligible landlords shall meet a set of tenant protection criteria. State government should recoup these funds with a temporary or permanent fee on the largest landlords.

Unhoused: Set aside 20% of the total 2020-21 homelessness budget to combat youth homelessness.

Housing: Dedicate significant funding and deploy a set of strategies to reign in speculation in the housing market.

Housing: End predatory displacement financing by requiring state chartered banks and state licensed lenders to develop an anti-displacement financing policy.

A government focused on care and inclusion that lifts all people out of poverty allowing us to live full and happy lives.

Immigration: Direct local jails and prisons to suspend the transfer of individuals from California's custody to ICE in order to protect Californians from being subjected to inhumane and unsanitary conditions in immigration detention where the COVID-19 virus has been rapidly spreading.

Immigration: Expand EITC for ITIN workers and allow it to go into effect retroactively.

Expand Aid Programs: Implement a public education program to get people to file federal tax returns so that they can receive the \$1,200 federal stimulus checks.

Nonprofits: Direct departments to continue paying contractors who are underperforming due to temporary closures and suspension or reduction of services associated with COVID-19 and provide expedited or automatic approval process for budget modifications that do not increase the contract.

Small business: Invest in a \$100 million grant program for small businesses with 1-25 employees and under \$1 million in revenue disseminated by CDFIs and economic development community based organizations to ensure that hard to reach and historically marginalized small businesses and sole proprietors benefit from the program.

SEED Initiative: Maintain the \$10 million SEED Initiative currently in the proposed budget.

Policies and Programs that prioritize workers and communities over corporate executives.

Worker Protections: Ensure that workers receive the benefits they deserve by mandating a presumption that contracting COVID-19 or exposure to and physician ordered quarantine due to COVID-19 is conclusively determined to arise out of and in the course of employment for all essential workers.

Worker protections: Require California and its healthcare system to have a long term plan for ensuring we have an adequate supply of PPE.

Worker Protections: Expand California leave laws to ensure coverage for all workers not covered by the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act including amending the California Family Rights Act to ensure that workers can take time off to care for themselves or their loved ones without losing their jobs.

Worker Protections: Create an "Emergency Fund" for workers that cannot access unemployment insurance and other safety because they are excluded by law such as garment workers, childcare workers and undocumented workers

Worker Protections: Enact, SB 1257 (Durazo) which would eliminate the "household domestic service" exclusion in Cal/OSHA, which sets standards for employers to provide a safe working environment for workers.

Worker Protections: Enact SB 1399 (Durazo) which would put a stop to the most egregious exploitation of garment workers by ensuring that they are fairly compensated for their work and keep the wages they earn.

Payday Lenders: Issue comprehensive guidance to keep payday lenders and Merchant Cash Advance shops from increasing interest rates.

Childcare: Invest \$200 million from the CARES Act into the creation of a child care fund to support essential workers child care needs. This investment would fund approximately 80,000 childcare slots.

Safety Net for All: Create a temporary, partial income replacement program for excluded workers who are not eligible for the state or federal benefits administered by EDD and who are unemployed or underemployed as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A just transition to a green, regenerative economy that ensures all Californians have a clean and safe environment where they live, work, play and pray.

Utilities & Water Service: Prohibit utility shutoffs and restore service for any essential service, including but not limited to: broadband, mobile phones, electricity, natural gas, water for those with combined water/sewer utility. In addition, waive all liens, late fees, and penalties on such utilities. This includes implementation of EO N-42-20, immediately ending all disconnections of water service for nonpayment, and restoring service to all those who had water service disconnected since March 4, 2020.

Environment: Implement health-protective regulations that impact clean air, clean water, and environmental health must not be delayed or rolled back, especially not during a health crisis.

Environment: Retain the use of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds for incentives that reduce greenhouse gases and localized air pollution from vehicles.

Environment: Develop an economic stimulus package that aligns spending with good job creation with benefits to public health, the environment, and climate resiliency. Any such plan must be informed by impacted communities.

Environment: Enact AB 345 (Muratsuchi) to ensure that CalGEM finishes the public health and safety rulemaking currently underway, provides resources for impacted communities to participate, and establishes a health and safety buffer zone between oil extraction and communities. As the link between exposure to air pollution and susceptibility to COVID-19 has emerged, CalGEM has the responsibility to establish a setback and any other measures that will help improve public health coming out of this crisis.

Expand and Protect our democratic process, ensuring robust, accessible opportunities for all Californians to determine the future of our government and economy.

Voting: Mail every voter a ballot, require robust in-person voting options and early voting, ensure additional resources for a massive public education and outreach campaign so every voter understands their options to vote safely, and provide poll workers with protective gear and "hazard pay".

Public Access: Continue to ensure that the public, and especially those most impacted by decisions, both locally and state-wide, can participate remotely in decision making.

Sincerely,

The Building the CA Dream Alliance Covid-19 Committee



Kathryn Phillips
Director
Sierra Club California



Orville Thomas
Director of Government Affairs
California Immigrant Policy Center



Melissa Romero
Legislative Affairs Manager
California League of Conservation Voters



Matt Legé
Government Relations Advocate
SEIU California



Regina Q. Banks, JD
Director
Lutheran Office of Public Policy- California



Shannon K. Hovis
Director
NARAL Pro-Choice California



Sylvie Chi
Policy Director
Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)



Elena Santamaria
Policy Advisor
NextGen California



Tim Molina
Sr. Political Strategist
California Donor Table



Amber Bauer
Executive Director
UFCW Western States Council

Cc:

The Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker of the Assembly
The Honorable Toni Atkins, President pro Tempore
Assemblymember Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
Senator Holly Mitchell, Chair, Senate Budget Committee
Ann O'Leary, Chief of Staff to the Governor, Co-Chair of the Governor's Task Force on
Business and Jobs Recovery
Angie Wei, Special Advisor to the Governor in the Office of the Governor
Tom Steyer, Chief Advisor to the Governor on Business and Jobs Recovery and Co-Chair
of the Governor's Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery