



April 3, 2020

Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 W. Temple St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Consequences of “Protecting Workers of Los Angeles County” Motion

Dear Chair Barger,

The undersigned Los Angeles regional business groups commend you and the Board of Supervisors for your efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 and provide relief for residents, workers and businesses. We greatly appreciate all that you are doing to keep the county running and recognize the difficult decisions you and the Board of Supervisors made to keep our communities safe.

We acknowledge the Board’s intent to ensure workers have appropriate protections to stay healthy and safe during this crisis but have serious concerns regarding the “right of recall” and “worker retention” policies described in the “Protecting Workers of Los Angeles County” motion adopted at the Board’s most recent meeting on Tuesday, March 31. The motion requests a report back to the Board from the Chief Executive Officer after consultation with County Counsel, relevant departments and labor representatives on the feasibility of implementing specified policies for essential workers in 7 days. **We believe implementing “right of recall” and “worker retention” policies as proposed in the timeline provided and without the input of impacted stakeholders is premature and could deepen the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.** This letter outlines our concerns and proposed next steps.

Businesses are struggling to stay solvent, keep people employed and contribute to the economy all while contributing to the fiscal wellbeing of our local governments. The “right of recall” for workers laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic to be the first rehired and “worker retention” policies in case businesses file bankruptcies and/or are sold as a result of the COVID-19 crisis do not provide the flexibility needed for businesses to respond nimbly to complexities and unforeseen challenges arising

from this unprecedented state of affairs. While the motion specifies applicability to “essential workers” it does not define the term. At this time, it is unclear which workers, industries and business sizes would experience long term impacts resulting from further action on these policies. More regulations will create even more confusion and uncertainty for organizations during a time when reliability is of paramount importance. Businesses should be supported, not face new, untenable requirements that damage their operations. **For these reasons, we are strongly opposed to any additional actions the Board would take to move forward with “right of recall” or “worker retention” policies.**

We are also concerned that the Board of Supervisors did not instruct the County CEO and relevant departments and agencies to consult with employers – the very entities that create jobs and drive the economy – on the feasibility of policy implementation. The Board of Supervisors should partner with employers and employees to develop solutions that are feasible, not respond with emergency measures like these that will worsen our economic environment and inflict great damage on our local businesses. As the first step of recovery, we need the Board of Supervisors to take immediate action to bring back economic stability which means no new regulations, minimizing obstacles, promoting flexibility and preserving certainty for businesses.

We don’t know the full extent of the impact that COVID-19 will have on our local economy yet, but we know that it will be severe. “Right of recall” and “worker retention” regulations are sweeping policy changes and should not be done without adequate public input, economic analysis and discussion. **At the very least, we urge the Board of Supervisors to request additional report backs that include input from impacted stakeholders, rigorous economic analysis, clarification on the scope of “essential workers” and ample time for public input in order to fully consider the long-term impact these policies will have on our local economy.**

We are proud to represent the business and civic community of the greater Los Angeles region and know that by working together we can build on our successes and help Los Angeles County stay open for business with good paying jobs that support families. We are ready to partner with you to ensure our region can fully thrive on the other side of this pandemic. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Central City Association (CCA)
Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Business Council
Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed)
Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA)

cc: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors