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RELEASE: What Others Are Saying About the *Keep California Working Act*

Nonpartisan Coalition Supporting *Keep California Working Act* Grows

SACRAMENTO – Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno), Senator Anna Caballero (D-Salinas), and Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Laguna Beach) unveiled new coalition support and legislative details of the *Keep California Working Act* earlier this morning during a [virtual press conference](#).

The *Keep California Working Act*, otherwise known as [Senate Bill 74](#), is a bipartisan small business relief package spearheaded by Senators Andreas Borgeas and Anna Caballero, and Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris. The bill invests \$2.6 billion (or 10% of California's projected windfall) in grants for small businesses and non-profits impacted by COVID-19.

The *Keep California Working Act* has garnered significant momentum in the Legislature with new co-authors signing on to the bill in recent weeks. **A total of forty-one legislators, or more than one-third of the entire California**

Legislature, are now supporting the measure. This milestone signifies an opportunity for the Legislature to work together on small business and non-profit relief efforts. Senator Borgeas, Senator Caballero, and Assemblywoman Petrie-Norris have expressed willingness to work with the Governor and legislative leadership to deliver this much-needed relief in a thoughtful yet expedited fashion.

Legislators Unveil New Details

Amendments are being drafted to best help small businesses and nonprofits. The Governor's initial grant program rollout is serving as a model and SB 74 will reflect any modifications to address additional needs in providing relief to small businesses and nonprofits.

Some key differences in SB 74: The \$2.6 billion grant program would have six award tiers, with eligible businesses not exceeding \$5 million in gross revenue and grant awards not exceeding \$75,000.

The bill's authors recognize there are existing regional disparities when it comes to accessing programs and aid. To address this, the authors are working closely with statewide and local partners to determine the most equitable way to approve the grant applications in order to ensure a fair distribution across regions and sectors.

Small Business and Nonprofit Leaders Share Testimony:

During the virtual press conference, small business and nonprofit leaders throughout the state shared their testimony on the impact SB 74 would have in their respective communities. Among them was Jan Masaoka, CEO of the California Association of Nonprofits; Alejandro Chavez, Executive Director of the Salinas United Business Association (SUBA); Lucy Dunn, President and CEO of the Orange County Business Council (OCBC); and, Chuck Van Fleet, President of the California Restaurant Association Fresno Chapter.

"One in every 14 jobs in California is at a nonprofit, and nonprofits provide vital services, needed more than ever by our communities," said **Jan Masaoka, CEO of the California Association of Nonprofits** (CalNonprofits). "SB 74 will bring critical resources to nonprofits to keep those jobs and services in local communities. We thank the bill authors for introducing this bill to support much-needed relief for our nonprofits and small businesses."

"Restaurants have been hit hard under California's COVID-19 restrictions," said **Chuck Van Fleet, President of the California Restaurant Association Fresno Chapter**. "The Keep California Working Act would provide much needed support to small businesses, particularly restaurants, in order to keep them in business and sustain jobs."

"95% of California's economic success is based upon small business success. They create jobs, employ millions; they are entrepreneurs and innovators. Yet those same small businesses have disproportionately shouldered the financial impacts of COVID-19. The Keep California Working Act sends a lifeline to those still trying to keep the doors open, folks employed and customers served. This bill, together with vaccines, offers the hope we need to reopen sooner and safer." - **Lucy Dunn, President and CEO, Orange County Business Council**

In addition, the following organizations support SB 74: California Building Industry Association (CBIA), National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB), California Association of Nonprofits (CalNonprofits), Orange County Business Council, City of Clovis, United Chamber Advocacy Network (UCAN), Salinas United Business Association (SUBA), Fresno Chamber of Commerce, Town of Mammoth Lakes, County of Mono, and The Fresno Bee.

Other groups also shared their support:

"This global pandemic has been devastating to our non-profits and small business community. The Keep California Working Act will help these businesses survive and recover." - **J.J. Ballesteros, Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce Board Chairman**

"I applaud the efforts of Assemblywoman Petrie-Norris to join with her fellow legislators in a bi-partisan way to bring a much-needed cash infusion to struggling small businesses that have been shut out from other grant programs." - **Steve Rosansky, President and C.E.O., Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce**

"As the owner of a 40-year small family-owned shop providing modest livelihoods to several individuals and families, I am truly grateful for the dedication of Cottie Petrie-Norris and her office for their relentless advocacy for small businesses. I am honored to express my support behind SB 74." - **Lauren Segal, The T-shirt Company at Laguna Beach**

"SB 74 may be an essential lifeline for California businesses that are struggling to maintain jobs and sustain economic vitality through this difficult time. I applaud members of the legislature that understand the importance of small business and strongly encourage passage of this critical legislation." - **Bryan Starr, President & CEO, Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce**

Senator Borgeas, Senator Caballero, and Assembly Member Petrie-Norris provided the following statements regarding the growing support for the *Keep California Working Act*:

"Our small businesses and employees need help now," said **Senator Andreas Borgeas** (R-Fresno), joint author of SB 74. "The fast-growing, bipartisan support for the *Keep California Working Act* in both houses demonstrates the political willpower for California to step up and protect our local economies. This is an issue on which Republicans and Democrats at the state level can all agree. I look forward to working with my legislative colleagues on advancing this critical measure through the legislative process."

"The coalition of support built around SB 74, really speaks to the urgent need of protecting our small businesses and nonprofits," said **Senator Anna Caballero** (D-Salinas). "It is critical to tap into the projected budget surplus this year to provide them with the immediate relief that they deserve. I applaud the efforts of my colleagues in both houses and those from across the aisle for their commitment to making SB 74 successful."

"California is at a critical juncture—small businesses employing millions of people are teetering on the brink. We must boldly act now to set our economy on the path to recovery," said **Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris**.

Other legislators also shared their support for SB 74:

"The pandemic has taken a serious toll on small businesses," said **Senator Melissa Hurtado** (D-Sanger). "Many have shut down or scaled back to protect our communities, but employers and workers still have to pay rent and support families and children. A targeted state relief package can ease their burden until we get California moving again."

"Due to the stay-at-home order brought on by the pandemic, too many businesses have suffered great loss, and many have been required to close," said

Senator Thomas Umberg (D – Orange County). "Small businesses are the backbone of the economy, and the state of California must step up to support them when possible. This bipartisan proposal will provide vital grants to businesses in need. This is a financial investment in the future of California, its businesses, its employees, its families, and its children."

"Our response to COVID-19 has required immense sacrifice from our small businesses and non-profits," said **Senator Richard Roth** (D-Riverside). "The Keep California Working Act recognizes these sacrifices and the integral role small businesses and non-profits have in our communities. As a co-author of SB 74, I look forward to working with my Legislative colleagues to ensure the Californian Dream remains a reality for small business owners and non-profits beyond these difficult times."

"Throughout the pandemic, California has asked for help from its small business community, and time and time again they have heeded the call," said **Senator Ben Hueso** (D-San Diego). "It is incumbent on us to return the favor and give them immediate support while we work to further address the economic devastation brought by COVID-19."

"The Legislature must help struggling workers and businesses in a way that is fiscally responsible," said **Senator Patricia Bates** (R-Laguna Niguel). "The *Keep California Working Act* does both and would be another essential lifeline for our economy. I look forward to working with Senator Andreas Borgeas and our colleagues to help get this measure enacted as soon as possible."

"California's remaining small businesses can't wait much longer before they are forced to permanently close their doors," said **Senator Melissa Melendez** (R-Lake Elsinore). SB 74 will provide much-needed relief during these economically tough times, and help Californians stay employed."

"With the government ordered shutdown and restrictions destroying jobs throughout California, providing grants to the few surviving small businesses is the least the state can do," stated **Senate Republican Caucus Chair Brian Jones**.

"SB 74 is critical to ensure the swift delivery and equitable distribution of grant funds to small businesses across our state who have been the hardest hit by this pandemic," said **Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia** (D-Coachella). "The Governor's recently announced economic budget proposal strongly aligns with our legislative push, and we remain laser-focused on our goal to secure and bring home these small business investments."

"As California looks towards economic recovery, strategic funding must be earmarked for small businesses and non-profits," said **Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson** (D-Carson). "They are the lifeblood of our cities and communities.

"Small businesses hire locally and recycle money within their communities. Their success or failure directly impacts the lives of those who depend on them for income or vital services. Non-profits have stepped up and filled in gaps for individuals and families, providing food, shelter and basic needs when safety nets have failed. I am proud to co-author SB74 and believe it will lift up our businesses and non-profits so that they can, in turn, begin to recover and lift up California."

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy," **Assembly Republican Leader Marie Waldron** (R- Escondido) said. "Helping these businesses survive these tough times is good for both workers and owners. Right now, it's important to help get people back to work and keep those who are working employed."

"Any surplus revenue should immediately be invested in our small businesses and non-profits that have been decimated by this pandemic," said **Assemblyman Vince Fong** (R-Bakersfield). "The Keep California Working Act ensures we prioritize our tax dollars to help rebuild our economy by getting people back to work."

"Small businesses and nonprofits are the backbone of our community," **Assemblyman Tom Lackey** (R-Palmdale) said. "Immediate relief is urgently needed to prevent them from closing down permanently."

"California's small business and their employees have been hit hard by the COVID-19 shutdowns," said **Assemblyman Steven Choi** (R-Irvine). "SB 74 will provide much needed relief to California's job creators and our essential non-profits who are providing critical services to our communities."

"California small businesses are the heart and soul of our Orange County communities," said **Assemblywoman Laurie Davies** (R-Laguna Niguel). "I'm proud to co-author the Keep California Working Act to help empower our small businesses and nonprofits and give them a fighting chance to succeed after a year of economic hardship and uncertainty."

The state has decimated small businesses with one-size-fits all restrictions, and must play a significant role in helping them recover," said **Assemblyman James Gallagher** (R-Yuba City). "This is the right thing to do for California's small businesses, their employees, and our communities."

"Our small businesses, and more importantly, the people and the families behind them, are collapsing under immense financial pressure during this unprecedented time of economic uncertainty," said **Assemblymember Kelly Seyarto** (R-

Murrieta). "They are the foundation of our communities and they deserve better. SB 74 offers a lifeline, investing over \$2 billion in grant money into our small businesses and non-profit organizations without raising taxes. I am proud to join the bipartisan effort to support the Keep California Working Act."

The COVID shut-downs have devastated our local small businesses that we can't afford to lose," said **Suzette Martinez Valladares** (R-Santa Clarita). "They employ our family members, our neighbors, and keep the economic engine of California running strong. I'm signing on to The Keep California Working Act which will invest \$2.6 billion in grants so we can keep small businesses alive and running."

"Senator Borgeas and I represent overlapping districts covering the Central Valley so we have seen first-hand how many lives and livelihoods have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 on so many levels," said **Assemblyman Heath Flora** (R-Ripon). "I'm happy to co-author SB 74 to help the Central Valley and the rest of California safely re-open the economy before it's too late."

"Small businesses throughout California have been devastated with the COVID-19 pandemic and I'm proud to co-author legislation that brings common sense solutions to the small business community to get them back on their feet." - **Assemblyman Thurston "Smitty" Smith**

"Small businesses, their employees and their families are hurting and need relief now," said **Assemblywoman Janet Nguyen**. "I can think of no better use of the State Budget surplus than to boost our local economies and keep businesses open. People want to get back to work so they can provide food, housing and basic needs for their family. This bill works to accomplish just that."

"Small businesses, and their employees, are on the brink of fiscal ruin and in desperate need of real financial assistance," said **Assemblyman Chad Mayes** (I-Yucca Valley). "Small businesses have followed complex state health guidelines to their financial detriment. The legislature must act quickly to pass a measure like SB74 to provide much needed economic relief."

Below is a complete list of legislators who have signed on to the bill:

Senators Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) and Anna Caballero (D-Salinas) have joint authored the measure, and Senate co-authors include Senators Patricia Bates (R-

Laguna Niguel), Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield), Susan Eggman (D-Stockton), Melissa Hurtado (D-Sanger), Richard Roth (D-Riverside), Bob Archuleta (D-Pico Rivera), Tom Umberg (D-Orange County), Ben Hueso (D-San Diego), Lena Gonzalez (D-Long Beach), Susan Rubio (D-Baldwin Park), Brian Dahle (R-Bieber), Brian Jones (R-Santee), Jim Nielsen (R-Tehama), Melissa Melendez (R-Lake Elsinore), Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R-Yucaipa), Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), and Scott Wilk (R-Santa Clarita).

Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Laguna Beach) is a principal co-author of the measure, and Assembly co-authors include Assembly Members Frank Bigelow (R-O'Neals), Phillip Chen (R-Brea), Steven S. Choi (R-Irvine), Laurie Davies (R-Laguna Niguel), Heath Flora (R-Ripon), Vince Fong (R-Bakersfield), James Gallagher (R-Yuba City), Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella), Tom Lackey (R-Palmdale), Devon Mathis (R-Visalia), Janet Nguyen (R-Garden Grove), Jim Patterson (R-Fresno), Kelly Seyarto (R-Murrieta), Thurston "Smitty" Smith (R-Apple Valley), Randy Voepel (R-Santee), Suzette Martinez Valladares (R-Santa Clarita), Mike Gipson (D-Carson), Marie Waldron (R-Escondido), Blanca Rubio (D-Baldwin Park), Chad Mayes (I-Yucca Valley), and Jordan Cunningham (R-San Luis Obispo).

For the current text of the *Keep California Working Act*, click [here](#).

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