

Communication from Public

Name: Stonewall Democratic Club

Date Submitted: 01/25/2021 10:47 PM

Council File No: 20-1609

Comments for Public Posting: January 25, 2021 Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council Los Angeles City Hall 200 N. Spring Street, Room 340 Los Angeles, CA 90012 Re: CF 20-1609 - Letter of Support for Hazard Pay for Grocery Workers Dear Councilmembers: Since our founding in 1975 as the nation's first LGBTQ+, feminist, and progressive political group, the Stonewall Democratic Club has served on the front lines fighting for constituencies in need. Today we write to you in strong support of CF 20-1609, which would enact an emergency temporary ordinance of \$5.00 hazard pay for grocery workers in the City of Los Angeles. We stand with advocates including UFCW 770 and their members, as well as grocery workers from across the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County who have organized around this effort. Major grocers have seen record profits since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. One such grocer, Kroger, owns the major regional chains Food 4 Less and Ralphs and rolled back its modest hazard pay increases in May 2020, after only six weeks in effect. Grocery workers are the unsung heroes of this pandemic, and have been on the front lines risking their lives for almost a year. As families struggle with the health and economic havoc wreaked by COVID-19, including widespread unemployment, many grocery workers have become the primary earners in their households. Working Angelenos, especially families of color, have also not been able to shelter in place, as they are more likely to hold essential jobs and thus face an increased exposure to COVID-19. Throughout our county, COVID-19 remains high and ICU capacity remains low. Thus, grocery store workers continue to face the risk of infection and endure hazardous working conditions. To date, over 2,000 UFCW 770 members have contracted COVID-19. Nationwide, more than 200 UFCW members have died of COVID-19. We know the number is much higher due to lack of reporting by all grocery chains. Grocery workers are essential to our lives and to the Los Angeles region. They deserve hazard pay, and this is the right policy for this unprecedented moment. Large grocers can afford it, and essential workers need it. Los Angeles must lead, as it always has, in fighting for the rights and dignity of working people, and other large cities throughout California are poised to follow suit. Thank you for your leadership and support of this urgent issue.

Sincerely, Jane Wishon Political Vice President Stonewall
Democratic Club



January 25, 2021

Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 340
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: CF 20-1609 - Letter of Support for Hazard Pay for Grocery Workers

Dear Councilmembers:

Since our founding in 1975 as the nation's first LGBTQ+, feminist, and progressive political group, the Stonewall Democratic Club has served on the front lines fighting for constituencies in need. Today we write to you in strong support of CF 20-1609, which would enact an emergency temporary ordinance of \$5.00 hazard pay for grocery workers in the City of Los Angeles.

We stand with advocates including UFCW 770 and their members, as well as grocery workers from across the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County who have organized around this effort. Major grocers have seen record profits since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. One such grocer, Kroger, owns the major regional chains Food 4 Less and Ralphs and rolled back its modest hazard pay increases in May 2020, after only six weeks in effect.

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Sincerely,

Jane Wishon
Political Vice President

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 01/25/2021 04:23 PM

Council File No: 20-1609

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), I am writing express our concern with the Los Angeles City Hazard Pay motion (20-1589) that was referred to the Economic Development Committee on December 15th. The Chamber, along with its member grocers, the larger business community, and local stakeholders, believes that we can protect and support essential grocery workers without increasing costs during a pandemic-induced economic recession. We also believe more time is needed to assess the negative consequences of extra pay- increase motions before causing unintended consequences for our grocers, their employees, and the community that relies on them to feed their families.

January 26, 2021

Council President Nury Martinez
Sixth District
City Hall, 200 N. Spring Street, Room 470
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Grocery Workers/COVID-19/State Health Orders/Hazard Pay Motion

Dear Council President Nury Martinez:

On behalf of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), we write to express our concern with the Los Angeles City Hazard Pay motion (20-1609) that was referred to the Economic Development Committee on December 15th. The Chamber, along with its member grocers, the larger business community, and local stakeholders, believes that we can protect and support essential grocery workers without increasing costs during a pandemic-induced economic recession. We also believe more time is needed to assess the negative consequences of extra pay-increase motions before causing unintended consequences for our grocers, their employees, and the community that relies on them to feed their families.

Grocery stores recognize the sacrifice of their employees that work on the frontlines providing customers safe access to food and other products during this incredibly difficult time. To protect their workers, customers, and business, grocers have invested billions in equipment, enhanced safety protocols, extra pay and bonuses, and additional health benefits for grocery workers. Unfortunately, this motion targets grocery stores that have complied with safety ordinances, drives up grocery costs for families, and puts more financial strain on struggling grocery stores and their employees at the worst time. An additional \$5/hour increase in grocery worker pay would significantly increase the cost of food and groceries for Los Angeles families and communities, especially for low-income, people of color and disadvantaged communities.

Higher costs could also force grocers to reduce the number of workers, available hours, and store locations. Many grocers may find it too difficult to remain open, especially independent grocers, and groceries in disadvantaged communities because most operate on thin margins, even during the pandemic. If grocery stores start to shut down, it will only increase food insecurity, especially in low-income and disadvantaged neighborhoods. That is why we are asking our LA City Councilmembers to request an economic impact assessment to better understand the consequences of its motion before requiring extra pay to grocery workers. We also believe the City will benefit from holding listening sessions with the business community and other stakeholders to allow an opportunity to discuss with City leaders the impacts of the Hazard pay motion and possible solutions we can support as partners in addressing the impacts of the pandemic.

For the reasons state above, we are urging our City Councilmembers to complete an analysis of the costs, assess impacts on families and communities, and obtain input from grocers and businesses before voting on the language. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact Public Policy Director, Jacqueline Silvers, with any questions at jsilvers@lachamber.com or 213-580-7518.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Salinas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maria Salinas
President & CEO

CC: Los Angeles City Councilmembers