

Governor Gavin Newsom
Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins
Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Senate Budget Chair Nancy Skinner
Assembly Budget Chair Phil Ting
Senate Budget Sub-committee on Education Chair John Laird
Assembly Budget Sub-committee on Education Chair Kevin McCarty

Re: Funding for University of California Worker Rights Policy Collaborative

Dear Governor Gavin Newsom, President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins, Speaker Anthony Rendon, Senators Nancy Skinner and John Laird, and Assembly Members Phil Ting and Kevin McCarty:

The following organizations and individuals are writing to support the statewide request for a \$13 million on-going annual augmentation of state funding to expand labor research and education at the University of California.

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified long-standing disparities as Black, Latinx, low-wage, immigrant, and women workers faced greater losses of income and exposure to workplace hazards with little to no safety net. The pandemic also accelerated low-road approaches to economic development such as subcontracting, temporary, and gig work that significantly lowered wages and reduced workers' economic security and bargaining power. We must address these challenges with evidence-based policy solutions that center working people, and collaborations with California worker organizations and agencies that support workers.

While there are six major business and management schools within the University of California, funding for labor research and education is very small in comparison. The \$13 million annual augmentation would be go to the established Labor Center & Labor Institute at UC Berkeley (\$3 million), Labor Center & Labor Institute at UCLA (\$3 million), the Community and Labor Center at UC Merced (\$3 million), the Labor Occupational Health program based on Berkeley (\$500,000), the Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program based at UCLA (\$500,000), and new initiatives on other UC campuses (\$3 million).

Labor Centers and the Labor Safety and Health programs have been under-resourced, but have a distinguished track record of research excellence, deep community engagement, and careful financial management. Their policy research, technical assistance, and training programs played an important role in supporting the California Dream Act and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); expanding Medi-Cal to all Californians regardless of immigration status; expanding the California Earned Income Tax Credit to undocumented immigrant worker households; incubating Black Worker Centers; establishing California's Secure Choice retirement program; raising the minimum wage and labor standards in the state and improving

enforcement; developing a Jobs and Climate Action Plan as requested by the state legislature; and strengthening the expanding High Road Training Partnerships, to name a few examples.

These established programs, in cooperation with the California Labor Federation and faculty and research staff on other UC Campuses, will modernize and develop UC labor research and education to understand and help guide emerging 21st century economic changes in the Inland Empire, the Sacramento region, the Santa Cruz/Monterey region, the Central Coast, San Diego, Orange County and all of California in partnership with our UC campuses.

Your support for this statewide request would strengthen the future of UC labor research and education in the world's fifth largest economy to advance labor and employment policy, workforce development, a more worker-centered economy, and the education and the training of future generations of researchers, policymakers and public servants.

Sincerely,

CC: Natalie Palugyai – Labor and Workforce Development Agency, Secretary

Christy Bouma, Governor's Office, Legislative Affairs Secretary

Nichole Munoz-Murillo, Governor's Office, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary

Keely Bosler, Department of Finance, Director

Rebecca Kirk, Department of Finance

Monica Henestroza, Special Assistant to the Speaker, Office of the Assembly

Cesar Diaz, Principal Consultant, Office of Senate President Pro-Tempore

Mark Martin, Assembly Subcommittee #2 on Higher Education, Consultant

Christopher Francis, PhD, Senate Subcommittee #1 on Higher Education, Consultant