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Assembly California Legislature



ASH KALRA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, TWENTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CHAIR: LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE
EDUCATION
JUDICIARY
WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

March 5, 2019

RE: Item 3.3 – Council Priority Setting: #24 – Update the Council’s Wage Theft Prevention Policy

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Council:

I would like to show my support for Vice Mayor Chappie Jones’ and Councilmembers Raul Peralez, Magdalena Carrasco, and Sergio Jimenez’s memorandum on Council Priority Setting nomination #24, updating San José’s Wage Theft Prevention Ordinance. Wage theft is illegal in the State of California and should never be tolerated. I am proud that when I was on San José City Council in 2016, we were able to pass the Wage Theft Prevention Ordinance to protect our workers, but as seen today, especially with the recent horrific events associated with the Silvery Towers construction project, we must now do more to ensure that major construction projects and public works contractors are held accountable for the fair treatment and fair wages of their employees.

As the Chair of the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee, I urge you to protect construction workers, and to protect our hardworking families who are struggling to survive in one of the most expensive regions in California. All too often I hear about irresponsible contractors and developers in the construction industry who refuse to pay their workers overtime, or misclassify them as “independent contractors” so that they don’t have to provide them with any benefits. We cannot allow the backbone of our communities to be exploited any longer. It is time to stand up for our workers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Ash Kalra
State Assemblymember, 27th District
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RE: Item 3.3 – Council Priority Setting: #19 – Suicide Prevention Strategy

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Council:

I would like to show my support for Councilmember Raul Perez's memorandum for Council Priority Setting nomination #19, prioritizing the development of a Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan in the City of San José. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers in the nation, and nearly 25% of all suicide attempts are made by young people. In California alone, we lose, on average, one youth every other day to suicide --- that's roughly 172 a year. In San José specifically, there were nearly 400 suicides between 2011 and 2016. As a State of California Assemblymember representing nearly half of San José, these statistics are far beyond worrisome and devastating. It is time we as elected leaders step in to address this daunting crisis and protect our communities.

Many families and individuals suffer silently, often isolated by the stigma surrounding mental illness, which then leads to the lack of knowledge on available resources. This is especially common in communities of color, which our diverse city is proud to have. We can and must advocate for our communities by addressing this crisis. Right now, only four cities in the County of Santa Clara have policies set in place to address suicide prevention, including Palo Alto, Los Gatos, Mountain View, and Morgan Hill. As the tenth largest city in the nation, it is time we step in to help those most vulnerable in our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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March 5, 2019

RE: Item 3.3 – Council Priority Setting: #22 – Cannabis: Equity Applicant Program

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Council:

I would like to show my support for Councilmembers Raul Peralez and Magdalena Carrasco's memorandum for Council Priority Setting nomination #22, creating a cannabis equity program after the passage of SB 1294: California Cannabis Equity Act of 2018. I am grateful that Governor Brown included a \$10 million budget to help fund equity programs throughout California, and since the City of San José has always been ahead of the game in cannabis policy, now is the time to take the lead and ensure we provide the opportunity for anyone interested in being a part of the cannabis industry.

As a former deputy public defender, I have witnessed so many people of color, mainly African Americans and Latino Americans, arrested or incarcerated for possession or sale of marijuana, offenses that are now legal after the voter-approved passage of Proposition 64. If these individuals want to get into the cannabis industry and be successful, responsible business owners, they are already miles behind due to social injustices and lack of resources to help people of color succeed. The California Cannabis Equity Act of 2018 will become that resource and since the City of San José has long been praised for its diversity, we need to show that we, as elected officials, prioritize the success of minority-owned businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Ash Kalra
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