

September 3, 2019

Mayor Robert Garcia & Long Beach City Council  
411 W. Ocean Blvd., 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**RE: Independent Jobs Coordinator and Disadvantaged Community Targeting**

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

We, the undersigned religious leaders in part of the Long Beach Ministers Alliance, are extremely concerned with Agenda Item #20, regarding the Project Labor Agreement (PLA) on the Sept. 3, 2019, City Council Agenda.

While we support the benefits that a PLA brings as well as the expansion to include street projects, we are disappointed that this Item was agendized without any outreach to our community: local organizations, educational institutions, faith leaders, or the Long Beach Local Hire Coalition.

As you know, we have been engaged in discussions around securing meaningful Local and Disadvantaged hiring in the Citywide PLA since the inception of these discussions. In fact, when this process began, we were solicited as a community partner to support and encourage the adoption of the citywide policy and were furthermore charged to recruit qualified Long Beach residents.

We have been consistently engaged in these conversations and should not be left out.

The proposed Agenda Item #20 makes no attempt to acknowledge or address our most pressing concerns: our request for an independent jobs coordinator and targeting of disadvantages communities. Economic recovery has not been felt equally in Long Beach, as low-income residents of color have consistently been left behind. In 2016, Black and Mixed-race residents had higher unemployment rates, at 12 and 11 percent, respectively, compared to the overall average unemployment rate of 7 percent<sup>1</sup>.

Los Angeles County has persistently grown the number of low-wage jobs since 2010<sup>2</sup>, as people of color receive lower wages than White workers at every level of education<sup>3</sup>, further perpetuating housing burden and disparate outcomes in quality of life.

Agenda Item #20 authorizes the City to begin negotiations to extend the PLA; however, the existing PLA is not structured in such a way for the City's low-income residents of color to benefit. Moreover, the item does not include direction to fix missing components that will improve Local and Disadvantaged hiring.

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<sup>1</sup> PolicyLink, *Equitable Growth Profile of the City of Long Beach* (2019), 32.

<sup>2</sup> PolicyLink, 31.

<sup>3</sup> PolicyLink 35.

The Item should include direction to Staff to negotiate a PLA that includes the following proven best practices:

1. **Require an Independent Jobs Coordinator for all PLA projects;**
2. **Define “Disadvantaged” worker using LA Metro’s comprehensive definition, which targets the most economically and socially disadvantaged populations;**
3. **Report “Disadvantaged” work hours by city or tier, so that we know if Long Beach residents are benefiting; and**
4. **Use Metro’s process for holding contractors liable for Local and Disadvantaged hiring.**

The City Council recently discussed the shortcomings of the PLA on both April 12, 2019 and June 11, 2019, directing Staff to work to improve the current Agreement, by adding an Independent Jobs Coordinator for all PLA projects. To the best of our knowledge, that still has not happened. How can we negotiate a new PLA when we have not honored our commitment to fix the existing one?

The timing of Item #20 is deeply concerning and problematic because it is scheduled for Council consideration the day after a holiday weekend and on the night of the FY 20 Budget adoption – an anticipated very long night. None of this bodes well for community input.

It is time that we learn from our mistakes and move forward. Therefore, we urge you to direct staff to include the four components listed above as part of any future Project Labor Agreements.

Sincerely,

**Pastor Gregory Sanders**

Long Beach Ministers Alliance, Chair  
The Rock Christian Fellowship, Lead Pastor

**Pastor Steven Neal**

L.I.F.E. Gospel Ministries

**Pastor Ron Barnes**

Hill Christ Gospel Assembly

**Jenny Dickson, Area Director**

Long Beach Young Life

**Rev. Kyle Blake**

The Gathering Lutheran Church

**Pastor Joe Ginder**

Friends Church

**Gloria Bradley**

Chapel of Change

**Rev. Larry Ginn**

Alpha Covenant, Inc.

**Pastor Mateo Cabello**

Cristo Viene

**Pamela Lewis**

Realtor

**Elder Tyrone Nance**

Long Beach Christian Fellowship

**Elder Emily Nance**

Long Beach Christian Family

**Pastor Jeanette Sanders-Moore**

Greater United Faith Apostolic Church

**Arctavy Williams**

The Rock Christian Fellowship, First Lady

**Dr. E.M. Williams, Pastor**

St. Luke Holy Baptist Church

**Misi Tagaloa**

Second Samoan Congregational Church  
UCC