



**Date:** March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**To:** Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

**From:** Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District  
Councilmember Mary Zendejas, First District  
Councilmember Cindy Allen, Second District  
Councilmember Suely Saro, Sixth District

**Subject:** Resolution for recognition of the “Carmen the Caregiver - We Can Do It!” Campaign in conjunction with International Women’s Day

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation to request the city attorney create a resolution for city council consideration recognizing the “Carmen the Caregiver - We Can Do It!” Campaign, by SEIU 2015, to encourage, support, and normalize mass vaccination against COVID-19 among in-home care providers, nursing home worker, their families, their communities.

**Discussion**

As of February 2021, over 73,000 Long Beach residents have been vaccinated,<sup>[1]</sup> with the City serving as a nationwide model for effective vaccine rollout.<sup>[2]</sup> Nonetheless, the demographic breakdown of administered vaccines highlights existing disparities, as the majority of those vaccinated have been older, white residents from the City’s east side, where COVID-19 rates are the lowest.<sup>[3]</sup> Moreover, historical inequities in healthcare and other manifestations of systemic racism have contributed to vaccine skepticism among communities of color—particularly the Black community—with only around 42% of Black adults reporting that they would consider taking the vaccine, despite the fact that this population is the most likely to report personally knowing someone who has been hospitalized or died as a result of having the coronavirus.<sup>[4]</sup>

In an effort to vaccinate its most vulnerable populations, the City has prioritized frontline essential workers, including the long-term care workforce. This population—encompassing workers from nursing homes, assisted living facilities, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and private agency homecare workers—has been especially vulnerable

<sup>[1]</sup>“COVID-19 Long Beach Updates” Feb. 2021 <https://app.powerbigov.us/>

<sup>[2]</sup>“Why Long Beach Is a Model for the Vaccine Rollout” Feb. 2021  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/03/us/california-covid-vaccine.html>



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[3] "Who's getting the COVID-19 vaccine locally? Mostly older, White residents in East Long Beach" Feb. 2021 <https://lbpost.com/news/whos-getting-the-covid-19-vaccine-locally-mostly-older-white-residents-in-east-long-beach>

to contracting COVID-19. Earlier in the pandemic, long-term care facilities were an epicenter for the virus, with roughly 40% of all COVID-related deaths linked to such facilities.<sup>[5]</sup> Despite their vulnerability to contracting COVID-19, healthcare workers, many of whom BIPOC women, have also expressed resistance to getting vaccinated, citing concerns surrounding the speed of vaccine development, the immunity it confers, and long-term side effects.<sup>[6]</sup>

The in-home care provider and nursing home provider workforce is represented by unions such as SEIU, which predominately comprises women of color. Current worker protections are particularly crucial for this population, as the pandemic has highlighted the indispensable nature of the long-term care workforce in maintaining community health and stability, and the need to engage this population in further education, outreach, and other linkages to ensure their own health and safety is guaranteed. Therefore, SEIU Local 2015, California's Long Term Care workers organization, has launched the "We Can Do It!" Campaign to encourage, support, and normalize mass vaccination against COVID-19 among the SEIU 2015 membership, their families, their communities, and the State as a whole.

In conjunction with International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>, the Long Beach City Council should commit to support the SEIU Local 2015 "We Can Do It!" mass vaccination campaign, and unleash the collective power to create a long-term care system that reflects the essential nature of the work and prevents future failures to protect both workers and care recipients. Utilizing a lens of equity, the campaign will work to target the most COVID-impacted communities in Long Beach, establish a network of distribution centers that expand the scope and accessibility of the vaccine to the City's caregiver communities, and organize and facilitate the distribution in a way that instills the utmost confidence in the vaccine.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Due to time constraints no fiscal analysis was conducted.

### **Suggested Action**

Approve recommendation.

### **Statement of Urgency**

Due to the critical nature of this issue urgency is requested on this item.

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<sup>[4]</sup> "Intent to Get a COVID-19 Vaccine Rises to 60% as Confidence in Research and Development Process Increases" Dec. 2020 <https://www.pewresearch.org>

<sup>[5]</sup> "After 'brutal year,' Long Beach nursing homes prepare for mass vaccine rollout starting Dec. 28" Dec. 2020 <https://lbpost.com/news/vaccine-nursing-homes-when-long-beach-long-term-care>

<sup>[6]</sup> "Why Are So Many Health-Care Workers Resisting the COVID Vaccine?" Feb. 2021 <https://www.newyorker.com/science/medical-dispatch/why-are-so-many-health-care-workers-resisting-the-covid-vaccine>

## **LONG BEACH CITY COUNCIL WE CAN DO IT! RESOLUTION**

**Whereas**, in honor of Women's History Month, the Long Beach City Council will recognize that caregiving work has historically fallen on women, predominantly women of color, in our communities and there is a need to invest in this workforce that has cared for the needs of our most vulnerable populations without recognition.

**Whereas**, the Long Beach City Council will commit to support the mass vaccination campaign of SEIU Local 2015 "We Can Do It!" and unleash the collective power to create a long term care system that reflects the essential nature of the work and prevents future failures to protect both workers and care recipients.

### **EQUITABLE VACCINE DELIVERY**

**Whereas**, 63% of nursing home workers rejected the vaccine when first offered, and;

**Whereas**, Black and Hispanic people are receiving smaller shares of vaccinations compared to their share of cases and deaths, and;

**Whereas**, Black and Hispanic people saw the largest decline in life expectancy due to the pandemic, and;

**Whereas**, California is behind the rest of the country in the vaccine rollout with 7.4% of the state's population vaccinated;

### **LONG TERM CARE FOR ALL**

**Whereas**, California is projected to have 106,500 seniors living in nursing homes by 2030, an increase of 15,000 (or 16%) since 2012, and;

**Whereas**, between 2015 and 2030, California's population of individuals older than 65 is expected to increase by 73 % from 5.2 million to 9 million, and;

**Whereas**, by 2030, more than one million California seniors will need assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and long-term care services and supports (LTSS), and;

**Whereas**, in addition to older adults, the number of younger adults with disabilities is expected to grow 20 % in the next 20 years in the state, and;

**Whereas**, long-term care work is both physically and emotionally challenging and is disproportionately performed by women and workers of color through the Medicaid funded In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, private homecare agencies, or unpaid family caregiving, and;

**Whereas**, low wages and insufficient training opportunities have created unsustainable turnover trends in the homecare and nursing home industries and are deterrents to potential job entrants, and;

**Whereas**, it is expected that California will need between 600,000 and 3.2 million caregivers by 2030 in order to meet the growing demand for homecare services, and;

**Whereas**, while there are more than 600,000 IHSS and private homecare agency workers in the state, there are an even greater number of unpaid caregivers providing these services, and;

**Whereas**, California will need at least an additional 15,800 Certified Nursing Assistants by 2026, and;

**Whereas**, of the approximately 1,100 Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) statewide, 465 SNFs (42 %) do not meet the minimum CNA hours requirement, and;

**Whereas**, we can no longer afford, both financially and morally, to let our IHSS, skilled nursing and private agency workers go unprotected, undertrained, understaffed and underpaid, and;

**Whereas**, in 2017, family caregivers in California provided four billion hours of care — worth an estimated \$63 billion — to their parents, spouses, partners, and other adults’, and;

**Whereas**, in addition to obstacles in accessing long-term care programs, 56% of Californians over the age of forty have made no long-term care savings plans, with thirty seven percent of Californians having no savings to draw on to pay for their care, despite the high need for LTSS for both seniors and adults alike, and;

**Whereas**, the growth in our aging population will impact most California families, causing financial and emotional strain in the absence of affordable, quality long-term care.

**Therefore, be it resolved that:**

1. In order to support an efficient and equitable vaccine rollout we are committed to breaking down the barriers for the members of the Long Beach community to receive the vaccine. We will join and support the efforts of SEIU Local 2015’s “We Can Do It!” Campaign. We will do that by:
  - a. Target the most impacted communities**
    - i. Vaccine distribution will be equitable and transparent and will prioritize communities hardest hit by the virus, including essential workers, people with underlying health conditions and disproportionately impacted communities of color.
  - b. Consider geographical equity, and establishing enough distribution centers that expand the scope and accessibility of the vaccine to our caregivers and communities;**
    - i. Vaccines will be provided free of charge, and workers should be provided with paid time off if the vaccination process requires them to miss work.
  - c. Organize and facilitate the distribution in a way that instills the utmost confidence in the vaccine.**
    - i. Create outreach and distribution plans that recognize the impact of structural racism and historical inequities in healthcare in causing heightened levels of distrust about vaccination in Black and brown communities.
    - ii. Employers will not use vaccines as a substitute for worker safety and infection control protocols nor for not ensuring access to personal protective equipment.
2. In order to win and advance California’s Long Term Care Agenda we are committed to restructure a system that was broken long before the pandemic. We will do this by committing to:
  - a. Access to a steady supply of medical-grade PPE for all long term caregivers in Long Beach;**
  - b. Investment in this workforce with a minimum of 2 weeks sick time, and hazard pay that reflects the essential nature of the work;**
  - c. Invest in training for infectious control and a program that includes disaster preparedness with regular upskilling allowing for workers’ healthcare growth opportunities;**
  - d. Establishing a livable wage and benefits that demonstrate the value of long term care workers not just in this moment, but moving forward and always;**
  - e. Further investment in recruitment and training of workers to meet the growing demands of the aging population.**



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**City of Long Beach Memorandum**  
*Working Together to Serve*

## REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

**Date:** March 9, 2021  
**To:** Monique De La Garza, City Clerk  
**From:** Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District  
**Subject:** Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of March 9, 2021

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Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda via the supplemental agenda.

The agenda title/recommendation for this item reads as follows:

Recommendation to request the city attorney create a resolution for city council consideration recognizing the "Carmen the Caregiver - We Can Do It!" Campaign, by SEIU 2015, to encourage, support, and normalize mass vaccination against COVID-19 among in-home care providers, nursing home worker, their families, their communities.

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
9	Rex Richardson	
1	Mary Zendejas	
2	Cindy Allen	

cc: Office of the Mayor