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Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

December 8, 2020

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Robert Garcia
Councilwoman Mary Zendejas
Councilwoman Suzie Price
Councilman Daryl Supernaw
Councilwoman Stacy Mungo

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager to create a \$5 million Restaurant, Brewery & Bar Resiliency Fund from the next federal COVID-19 stimulus fund package. This fund could be increased depending on demand and final federal stimulus bill.

DISCUSSION:

On March 4, 2020, the City of Long Beach (City) declared local health and City emergencies to strengthen the City's preparedness and ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was followed on March 16, 2020 by a "Safer at Home Order" issued by the City's Health Officer to enact protective measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. Since that time, the City's Health Orders have been updated regularly to reflect changes directed by the State of California and County of Los Angeles.

Most recently, due to the significant increases in COVID-19 case rate, positivity rate and hospitalizations, Los Angeles County and Long Beach health officials made the difficult decision to close in-person outdoor dining. These actions are saving lives but are also creating significant economic hardships to many families, workers, businesses, and government operations.

We recognize the financial difficulty that the restaurant, brewery and bar industries are facing and are committed to dedicating funding to support workers, small business owners and those who depend on this industry for income.

We have already begun conversations with the next presidential administration and expect the federal government will adopt a second COVID-19 relief package in early 2021.

The priority of these funds will go towards public health, testing and hospitals; but we should also use these recovery funds to support local businesses and their employees.

Our restaurant and bar industry has been one of the hardest hit across the city due to closures and health orders. These establishments will need direct city grants to survive.

In addition, LA County is also creating a similar multi-million dollar fund which local Long Beach restaurants and bars will be eligible for.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on December 8, 2020 to begin creation of the fund and provide guidance for the distribution of these dollars as soon as they are received.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding is contingent on federal stimulus dollars being allocated to the City for use in this program.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.