

February 17, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for \$300 million for State and Local Public Health Departments and the HERO Initiative

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in strong support of the Governor's proposal to invest \$300 million in ongoing State General Fund for public health infrastructure and the Public Health Equity and Readiness Opportunity (HERO) Initiative. These proposals will not only bolster public health recruitment and retention during a time of great need, but will also advance public health efforts statewide.

The Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services serves as the first line of defense against all public health challenges in Long Beach. As a local health jurisdiction, the City has led the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, administering more than 270,000 vaccinations, implementing mobile vaccine and testing programs, and managing a permanent distribution site for personal protective equipment and medical countermeasures. We depend on a highly skilled and specialized workforce that is often stretched far too thin, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges as public health workers have grappled with burnout and are being recruited by other sectors.

For this reason, the City of Long Beach asks the Legislature to approve the Governor's Public Health Proposal for \$300 million ongoing to State and Local Health Departments, which will help to preserve and bolster the public health workforce. Long Beach appreciates the Governor's budget proposal to sustain positions added during COVID-19 and expand local health department staffing beyond the pandemic response, as the need in areas such as communicable, chronic disease and public health laboratories has increased. In addition, the City supports the HERO Initiative investments in public health recruitment and retention, funds to waive public health nurse certification fees, worker upskill training, public health training, and more.

These investments are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of the public health profession and effective delivery of services in California. Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,



THOMAS B. MODICA
City Manager

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Committee
Marjorie Swartz, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
Agnes Lee, Office of the Assembly Speaker
Joe Stephenshaw, Staff Director, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
Scott Ogus, Consultant, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review Sub 3
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee
Andrea Margolis, Consultant, Assembly Budget Sub 1
Keely Bosler, Director, California Department of Finance
Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
Dr. Tomás Aragón, Director and State Public Health Officer, California Dept. of Public Health
Elizabeth Landsberg, Director, Department of Health Care Access and Information
Richard Figueroa, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Tam Ma, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

