



**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
COUNCIL PRESIDENT GEORGETTE GÓMEZ**

March 31, 2020

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing to you to urge you to classify grocery, pharmacy, and other categories of essential retail workers as emergency frontline personnel.

The workers in grocery stores, retail establishments, and food processing plants are on the front lines of the coronavirus outbreak working around the clock to keep these businesses open and ensure that families in our communities have the essential food and supplies they need.

Keeping our communities healthy and safe is the first priority and the workers need strong protections. It is time for the state and its leaders to step up to provide these brave workers protections and substantive support.

Classifying essential retail workers as emergency frontline personnel will provide access for these workers to receive enumerated and legislative benefits. These benefits should include:

- Right to wash their hands every 30 minutes, or as needed;
- Right to personal protection equipment (gloves and masks);
- Institution of plexiglass at checkstands and pharmacy counters;
- Access to sanitizers and increased sanitation activity;
- Customer crowd control and security guards;
- Standardized and limited operating hours for all grocery and drug stores (to allow for sanitation);
- Right to paid child care.

I recognize that there are many demands being put on you during these unprecedented times. However, essential retail workers are providing a critical service and are an invaluable part of the state's food and essential goods supply chain. Therefore, we must move swiftly and judiciously to protect them and our communities.

However, we shouldn't limit protections to essential retail workers. True security must go further. Workers across our food and pharmacy supply chain – from those who grow, harvest, and produce, who package, process, and distribute, who staff our stores and restaurants, to those who bring deliveries to our homes and businesses -

deserve all the protections possible. In protecting our workers, we protect our communities.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Georgette Gomez", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Georgette Gomez
Council President, City of San Diego and District Nine

CC: Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins
Senator Ben Hueso
Assemblymember Todd Gloria, District 78
Assemblymember Shirley Weber, District 79
Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez, District 80
Julie Su, Secretary, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency
Lilia Garcia-Brower, California Labor Commissioner