

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIKKI FORTUNATO BAS

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 257, AUTHORED BY ASSEMBLY MEMBER LORENA GONZALEZ OF DISTRICT 80, TO ENACT THE FAST FOOD ACCOUNTABILITY AND STANDARDS (FAST) RECOVERY ACT, LEGISLATION THAT WOULD EMPOWER AND PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S HALF-A-MILLION FAST FOOD WORKERS

WHEREAS, California fast food restaurants employ well over 556,000 Californians, the highest number of any state in the country. Of those fast food workers, a majority are over age 23 and nearly 70% are people of color; and

WHEREAS, historically, fast food industry workers have been subject to low wages and unsafe workplace conditions. A 2020 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that millions of full-time workers rely on federal health care and food assistance programs as a result of earning low wages, including a high concentration of fast food workers; and

WHEREAS, a March 2021, a report from researchers at UCLA and UC Berkeley found that in California, two-thirds of fast-food workers are enrolled in a major safety net program, at an average cost to taxpayers of \$4 billion statewide annually;¹ and

WHEREAS, even before the pandemic, fast-food workers faced overlapping challenges,² putting them on the razor's edge of economic calamity,³ including low wages, lack of worker voice on the job, workplace violence, harassment and wage theft; and

WHEREAS, more recently, fast food workers faced new risks from COVID-19. In an industry where workers operate in environments that are fast-paced, crowded and frequently in

¹ <https://www.labor.ucla.edu/publication/fast-food-covid19/>

² <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/7/6/20681186/fast-food-worker-burnout>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/21/missouri-fast-food-workers-better-pay-popeyes-economics>

physical contact with customers, fast food workers have been particularly vulnerable to contracting COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, researchers from the University of California, San Francisco⁴ found that line cooks had a 60% increase in mortality associated with the pandemic and that Latinx food service workers saw a 39% increase in mortality;⁵ and

WHEREAS, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous local, state and federal laws and regulations have been instituted to require operational changes on the part of businesses to protect employees from infection; and

WHEREAS, numerous complaints filed by fast food workers with local health departments illustrate fast food operators routinely have flouted protections, including, but not limited to, requiring workers to work without access to personal protective equipment, denying workers sick pay, failing to inform workers of exposure to COVID-19, actively hiding COVID-19 cases, and demanding that workers come to work when they are sick; and

WHEREAS, fast food workers are the largest and fastest growing group of low-wage workers in the state yet lack industry-specific protections; and

WHEREAS, AB 257, the FAST Recovery Act will ensure workers and employers work together with state agencies to raise overall standards and protections in the fast food industry; and

WHEREAS, the FAST Recovery Act would establish a statewide Fast Food Sector Council, which will include state agencies, employer and worker representatives, that will be tasked with periodically reviewing and creating minimum health, safety and employment standards in the fast food restaurant industry; and

WHEREAS, AB 257 would hold fast food franchisors responsible for ensuring franchisees comply with health, safety and employment standards; and

WHEREAS, the law established by AB 257 would help to address widening income inequality that has allowed a small number of executives to profit immensely while subjecting workers to poverty wages and unsustainable working conditions; and

⁴ <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2021/02/419866/study-estimates-excess-deaths-us-covid-19-pandemic-unemployment&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1621638861361000&usg=AOvVaw3HxHwqYNTZqCCSjGrUn40>

⁵ <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/02/jobs-where-workers-have-the-highest-risk-of-dying-from-covid-study.html>

WHEREAS, California can emerge from COVID-19 stronger than ever before, but only if essential workers have the opportunity to succeed. That means giving Black, brown, Asian and immigrant workers more power and a voice on the job; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Oakland City Council stands with workers, community groups and labor unions in strong support of Assembly Bill 257; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Council hereby directs the City Clerk to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the California Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins, California Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, Governor Gavin Newsom, and the Bill's primary sponsor, State Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES – FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST

ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California