

## MOTION

President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the WPA in 1935 to put more than 8 million Americans back to work during the apex of the financial calamity. During an eight-year period, numerous public infrastructure projects were completed under the ambitious government program. It was part of FDR's "New Deal" plan to lift the country out of the Great Depression by reforming the financial system and restoring the economy to pre-Depression levels. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are currently facing an economic recession not seen since the Great Depression era. Currently unemployment rates are exploding due to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 1 million unemployment claims have been filed within Los Angeles County and the economy has taken a devastating hit. According to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, the restaurant industry has seen 80% of jobs lost, and 890,000 people in the film and entertainment employees are not working. Among the more than 1 million who faced layoffs, over 75% earned an average annual salary of less than \$50,000 a year.

We cannot restart our economy by simply "re-opening" our cities and businesses and assume that the economic inequalities that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic will work themselves out without serious government intervention. With hundreds of millions of dollars in forthcoming stimulus money the City of Los Angeles should invest in the creation of a new public health workforce to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic and rescue the economy. In cooperation with community groups and non-profits the City of Los Angeles should launch a "transitional" public/private "New Deal" style jobs program to train and hire out-of-work Angelenos as community health workers and contact tracers to fill gaps in our health care system as well as provide meaningful employment to residents who desperately need it during these unprecedented times.

The Affordable Care Act defines a community health worker as "an individual who promotes health or nutrition within the community in which the individual resides." Per the Act, a CHW promotes health in the following ways:

- By serving as a liaison between communities and health care agencies
- By providing guidance and social assistance to community residents
- By enhancing community residents' ability to communicate effectively with health care providers
- By providing culturally and linguistically appropriate health or nutrition education
- By advocating for individual and community health
- By providing referral and follow-up services or otherwise coordinating care
- By proactively identifying and enrolling eligible individuals in federal, state, local, private, or nonprofit health and human services programs

A community health worker (CHW) serves as a liaison between the community and the health care, government, and social service systems. When an infectious disease like COVID-19 hits, community health workers on the front lines can have a life-saving impact. These are the people on the front lines, providing advocacy and support to civilians to help them improve their lifestyle and connect them with their proper healthcare options. Community health workers can help track



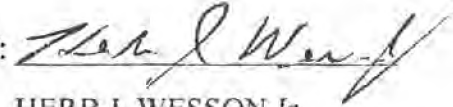
infection through contact tracing, set up video conferencing software for telemedicine appointments, check on high-risk patients with chronic conditions, transport food and supplies, and conduct outreach and education. This work is vital in the communities that have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), contact tracing, is a core disease control measure employed by local and state health department personnel for decades, is a key strategy for preventing further spread of COVID-19. There is a need for communities to scale up and train a large contact tracer workforce and work collaboratively across public and private agencies to stop the transmission of COVID-19. This is one of the most effective and important tools that the City of Los Angeles can utilize to prevent a second outbreak of COVID-19 infections.

The City of Los Angeles should move immediately to invest in efforts to increase the number of Community Health Workers and Contact Tracers available in order to bolster the economy as well as help prevent further spread of COVID-19 by creating a Community Care Corps.

**I THEREFORE MOVE**, that City Council instruct EWDD and the Personnel Department with assistance from the CAO and CLA, to work with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, to solicit input from community groups and non-profits and report back with a public/private, New Deal style hiring plan for a Community Care Corps, to fill gaps in our health care system as well as provide meaningful employment to residents who need it.

PRESENTED BY:

  
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SECONDED BY



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