



To:  
**California Fast Food Council Members**

June 24, 2024

Dear Fast Food Council members:

We write on behalf of thousands of cooks and cashiers organizing with the California Fast Food Workers Union. Over the past month, the implementation of a \$20/hour industry wage has provided fast food workers and our families much-needed economic relief. But, we know that truly transforming fast food into a fairer, more sustainable industry takes more than a one-time raise.

During the first convening of the Fast Food Council in March, we were inspired to hear council members - from the worker advocates to the fast food franchisees - commit to working together and coming up with solutions that council member Johal said would be “beneficial to employees and employers at the same time.”

In that spirit, we urge the Council and staff to continue the positive momentum of the inaugural meeting and move to schedule regular meetings of the Council so that our representatives can continue to discuss urgent issues facing industry stakeholders. We are also calling on the Council to schedule a field hearing where workers, business owners and the public have the opportunity to participate in the Council process laid out by 2023’s AB 1228.

**Before the next Council meeting, we are sharing recommendations reflecting our most urgent priorities:**

- (1)** Act to protect improvements to fast food workers’ pay enacted through AB-1228;
- (2)** Enact rules to increase stability for fast food workers scheduled hours and prevent the frequent, arbitrary, and often-retaliatory changes that exacerbate the impacts of poverty and housing insecurity;
- (3)** Ensure fast food workers are paid what they are owed, including pay and accrued leave, when owners sell, transfer or close their restaurants;
- (4)** Begin a process to investigate the causes of, and potential solutions to, pervasive abuses in the fast food industry, ranging from wage theft to harassment and discrimination to unsafe workplaces;
- (5)** Require employers to provide the Council with means to reach all fast food workers in the state to invite their input into and receive updates on the council’s work.



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The Governor's Future of Work Commission report names so much of what we all believe a job ought to offer: "a living wage, stable and predictable pay, control over scheduling, access to benefits, a safe and dignified work environment and opportunities for training and career advancement." Heeding our recommendations would do a great deal to improve the quality of fast food jobs in California and move those words from aspiration to concrete reality.

Sincerely,

California Fast Food Workers Union Steering Committee



[WWW.CALIFORNIAFASTFOODWORKERSUNION.ORG](http://WWW.CALIFORNIAFASTFOODWORKERSUNION.ORG)

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## Fast Food Worker Recommendations to Fast Food Council

Fast food workers urge the council to take the following actions in its historic first year:

- **Protect improvements to pay.** Reaching \$20 an hour is a major achievement. Yet despite this initial raise, fast food workers still struggle to pay rent, provide food and clothing to our families and put gas in our tanks. Fast food workers continue to face impossible choices like choosing between phone bills and a doctor visit; car repairs or back rent. In line with California's established practice of adjusting the minimum wage to keep pace with inflation the Council should:
  - Raise the statewide fast food minimum wage on January 1, 2025 by 3.5 percent, to \$20.70;
  - Raise the statewide fast food minimum wage by 3.5 percent on January 1, 2026 to \$21.40, unless the law and inflation rate require smaller increases.
- **Ensure stable jobs.** A more stable work environment benefits employers, employees and consumers. As employers' businesses grow and prosper, fast food workers should have the opportunity to add more hours.
  - Minimum standards are needed to prevent the practices that lead to instability including arbitrarily cutting hours, removing workers from the schedule and unfair terminations.
  - California should emulate cities from Los Angeles to San Jose to New York City that have enacted these protections. These reforms protect against arbitrary, and often-retaliatory, changes that exacerbate the impacts of poverty and housing insecurity.
- **Protect what we've earned.** Adopt rules to protect fast food workers from losing leave, sick days, wages or anything else employers owe workers when owners sell, transfer or close their restaurants.
  - To enable this, the Council would require employers to post a bond for each location or to provide a guarantee from their franchisor or other parent company with sufficient assets to cover the guarantee.



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- **Begin a process to investigate the causes of, and potential solutions to, pervasive abuses in the fast food industry.** Fast food workers continue to endure: wage theft; sexual harassment; discrimination; hazardous conditions from excessive heat to burns to violence and the threat of violence. Of particular concern in this sector are the thousands of documented child labor law violations committed by fast food operators.
  - In line with its mandate to address working conditions in the fast food industry, the Council should investigate and seek to identify causes and potential solutions to these chronic problems.
- **Require employers to provide the Council with means to reach all fast food workers in the state to invite their input into and receive updates on the Council's work.**
  - To enable this, the Council should set up a process for communication between itself and fast food workers. Employers should be required to facilitate this by providing any needed contact information.

