August 13, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  Robert J. Fenton
Governor, State of California  Regional Administrator, FEMA Region 9
State Capitol, First Floor  FEMA, 500 C St. SW
Sacramento, CA 95814  Washington, D.C. 20024

RE: Support for an Extension and Expansion of the Great Plates Program

Dear Governor Newsom and Mr. Fenton:

We are writing to respectfully request that an extension of the Great Plates Program be continually granted until December 31, 2020, at minimum, and that additional funds be allocated to expand the program. Given the recent spike in COVID-19 cases, the threat to public health remains all too serious. It is imperative that we maintain public safety and take precautions to protect California’s high-risk populations.

In April, California launched “Great Plates Delivered,” the nation’s first program designed to deliver meals to California’s high-risk and elderly populations. Since then, the program’s success has been felt by over 41,000 seniors, adults at high-risk from COVID-19, and local businesses alike. Comparatively, the restaurant industry has been the hardest-hit by permanent closures due to the pandemic. California alone accounts for 14.4% of the nation’s permanent restaurant closures. Given Great Plates’ success, it is clear that allocating additional funds to expand this program would greatly benefit its meal recipients and California’s economy.

Additional funds, for example, would allow smaller restaurants, which are typically unable to front high food costs, to participate, meaning more meals for more people and more business for more restaurants. The Great Plates Program has demonstrated the positive outcomes that occur when struggling restaurants are provided an opportunity to keep their staff employed and give back to their community. We must continue this program’s success by extending the Great Plates Program to, at least, the end of 2020 and direct funds towards program expansion opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (916) 319-2053.

Sincerely,

MIGUEL SANTIAGO  BRIAN MAIENSCHEIN
Assembly Member, 53rd District  Assembly Member, 77th District
MONIQUE LIMÓN  
Assembly Member, 37th District

EDUARDO GARCIA  
Assembly Member, 56th District

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Assembly Member, 56th District

ROB BONTA  
Assembly Member, 18th District

WENDY CARILLO  
Assembly Member, 51st District

SYDNEY KAMLAGER  
Assembly Member, 54th District

TASHA BOERNER-HORVATH  
Assembly Member, 76th District

MARC LEVINE  
Assembly Member, 10th District

KEVIN MULLIN  
Assembly Member, 22nd District

TOM LACKEY  
Assembly Member, 36th District

MIKE GIPSON  
Assembly Member, 64th District
BILL QUIRK
Assembly Member, 20th District

KANSEN CHU
Assembly Member, 25th District

MARIE WALDRON
Assembly Member, 75th District

LAURA FRIEDMAN
Assembly Member, 43rd District

ED CHAU
Assembly Member, 49th District

MARK STONE
Assembly Member, 29th District

ROBERT RIVAS
Assembly Member, 30th District

BEN HUESO
Senator, 40th District

MARIA ELENA DURAZO
Senator, 24th District