



Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia  
California State Assembly, State Capitol  
Room 4140 Sacramento, CA 95814

April 8, 2020

**RE: State Unemployment Benefits for Contract Workers**

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

The Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce (GCVCC) writes today out of concern for our Coachella Valley contractors that are experiencing significant difficulties applying for unemployment insurance. As you are aware, gig economy, contract and furloughed workers were included in the recent federal \$2.2 trillion relief package passed by Congress. While the federal government has stated they would qualify for unemployment benefits for the first time during the coronavirus pandemic, they remain in limbo inside the State of California.

We understand that the State of California Employment Development Department is awaiting clarification from the Labor Department about precisely who qualifies and what documentation is required. We would encourage the State to be proactive in this matter and aggressively pursue these parameters, even if it requires forging ahead without Federal guidance. The State of California has shown time again they are willing to act on behalf of their citizens, even when the Federal Government has lagged in their own efforts. This is one of those moments that may require similar leadership on the part of our State.

While people will receive benefits backdated to when they became unemployed because of the coronavirus, this does not offer relief to those suffering significant financial burdens now. Our independent contractors were already facing significant change and uncertainty due to AB5, our current state of emergency will only add to that anxiety and hardship.

The Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce supports these independent contractors in their efforts to receive the benefits rightfully owed to them, and we hope that Assemblymember Garcia can use his position to help expedite the process for delivery.

Sincerely,

Joshua R. Bonner, IOM  
President and CEO  
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce



The Voice of Business in the Coachella Valley

**About the Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce**

*The Chamber is a business membership organization representing the Coachella Valley. We support our members through legislative advocacy, education, networking, and other community-based opportunities. The Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce is a registered 501c6 non-profit supported through member contributions.*

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