June 15, 2020

Nevada Legislature
401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Speaker Frierson, Majority Leader Cannizzaro, and Nevada Legislators:

As community partners and advocates, we would like to thank all of you for your leadership and the work you’ve done to ensure all Nevadans remained safe and well during the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud the timely and difficult decisions that were made to close non-essential businesses to minimize the spread of the virus across the state. As Nevada begins to reopen, we are facing the most severe budget crisis in our state’s history, with Applied Analysis modeling the upcoming shortfall at $1 billion to $2 billion. As the state looks to balance our budget for the upcoming fiscal years, the below organizations and advocates request that our state legislature assess all potential revenue options prior to making budgetary cuts that would negatively affect and potentially harm Nevadans in the short and long term.

According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy’s Inequality Index, Nevada has the fifth most unfair state and local tax system in the country.¹ Our state’s regressive taxation policies place a higher tax burden on our lowest wage earners compared to all other wage earners. For example, Nevada’s lowest 20% of wage earners pay an estimated 10.2% of their family income in taxes compared to Nevada’s top 1% of wage earners only paying 1.9% of their family income in taxes. As the state looks at potential revenue options, we encourage the review of progressive revenue options that levy taxes on those who can afford to pay and do not disproportionately harm lower-wage earners.

Recognizing that Nevada will most likely not be able to raise a sufficient amount of revenue to offset the pending budget deficit, we urge the legislature to review each and every proposed cut through a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion lens. COVID-19’s effects have underscored the ways our nation’s history of racism, bias, and discrimination are embedded in our health, social, and economic systems.² Going forward, we urge the state to work towards aligning budgets and policies to reflect a more equitable and inclusive approach for all communities and an economic recovery that extends to all people regardless of race. In doing so, we urge the state to do the following:

- Target aid to those most in need due to the COVID-19 and consequent economic crises.
- Advance long term anti-racist and equitable policies to dismantle persistent racial, gender, and economic inequities and other barriers that non-dominant groups and identities experience.

¹ [https://itep.org/whopays/nevada/](https://itep.org/whopays/nevada/)
● Avoid further increases of regressive taxes and fees, such as state sales tax, which harm people living in poverty.
● Protect state finances to preserve the foundations of long-term economic growth and opportunity.

We recognize that there are many difficult choices to be made over the next few months and during the upcoming 81st Nevada Legislative Session. We are here to support you and are available for consultation throughout the process. The below organizations and advocates are committed to working together to keep Nevada strong and moving forward.

Sincerely,

ACTIONN
AFGE Local 2152 at Reno VA Hospital
Battle Born Progress
CARE Coalition
Center for Biological Diversity
Children's Advocacy Alliance
Collaboration Partners
Communities In Schools of Western Nevada
Community Chest, Inc.
Community Health Alliance
Community Services Agency
Culinary Union
Eagle Quest
Educate Nevada Now
Fallon Food Hub
Family to Family Connection, ISD 13
Food Bank of Northern Nevada
Foster Kinship
United Way of Southern Nevada
FUSED
Great Basin Resource Watch
High Sierra AHEC
HOPE For Nevada
Human Services Network
Sandy Miller, Former First Lady
Immunize Nevada
Indivisible Northern Nevada
Indivisible Owls LV
Jennifer Kalas Consulting, LLC
Latino ARTE and Culture
Leaders in Training
League of Women Voters of Nevada
Little House Day School
Make It Work Nevada
Make The Road Nevada
Minkaboo LLC
Ms. Gayle's Little School
Community Action Against Rape DBA The Rape Crisis Center
Naral Pro-Choice Nevada
National Association of Social Workers, Nevada Chapter
Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children
Nevada CASA Association
Nevada Coalition Against the Death Penalty
Nevada Conservation League
Nevada Homeless Alliance
Nevada PEP
Nevada Primary Care Association
Nevada Public Health Association
Nevada State Education Association
United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
Washoe Education Association
Women of Color + Coffee
Nevada Women's Lobby
Northern Nevada RAVE Family Foundation
One APIA Nevada
Paradise Las Vegas Indivisible
Planned Parenthood Mar Monte
Planned Parenthood Votes Nevada
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Purdue Marion & Associates
SAFY
SEI
SeIU Local 1107
Silver State Equality
State Innovation Exchange
Sunshine Childcare
The Adoption Exchange
The Children's Cabinet
The Grassroot Girls
Three Square Food Bank
Transgender Allies Group
YMCA of Southern Nevada
Crisis Support Services of Nevada
Foundation for Positively Kids
Nevada Justice Association
Turning Point, Inc.
Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition