



December 13, 2021

Dear Seattle City Councilmembers,

We are writing on behalf of our 2,500 members to encourage you to pass CB 120119, ending emergency legislation mandating additional pay of \$4 per hour for grocery workers in Seattle.

When Seattle City Council passed Ordinance 126274, the Chamber emphasized that providing quick and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines was the best and most effective way to ensure the safety of grocery workers and all front-line employees. We are very pleased that Seattleites came together to promote vaccination, resulting in Seattle becoming the first major American city to fully vaccinate 70% of eligible residents. Grocery workers became eligible for vaccines nearly nine months ago in March 2021. Currently, over 80% of Seattle residents aged 5 and older are fully vaccinated, with more people receiving vaccines and boosters daily.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Seattle's grocery stores mobilized to keep employees and shoppers safe. Grocery stores spent millions investing in new cleaning equipment, ventilation systems, and sanitation protocols. Grocery stores also stepped up to promote vaccine access for their employees and the whole community. The Seattle Metro Chamber partnered with QFC and Safeway to create pop-up vaccination clinics that resulted in over 18,000 vaccinations throughout the region.

We appreciate the Council revisiting increased pay, and we agree with Councilmember Mosqueda, the sponsor of CB 120119, that given vaccination rates and access in Seattle, health and safety risks related to COVID-19 are markedly different today compared to the start of the year, and it is time to repeal the additional pay for grocery workers. We urge you to pass CB 120119 through Full Council today.

Sincerely,

Alicia Teel  
Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Communications