January 9, 2017

Assemblyman Reginald Jones-Sawyer  
Co-Chair, Assembly Special Committee on the Office of the Attorney General  
State Capitol, Room 4126  
Sacramento, CA  95814

Assemblyman Mark Stone  
Co-Chair, Assembly Special Committee on the Office of the Attorney General  
State Capitol, Room 3146  
Sacramento, CA  95814

RE: Confirmation of Representative Xavier Becerra to Attorney General – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymembers Jones-Sawyer and Stone:

The California Labor Federation writes to express our enthusiastic support for the confirmation of Representative Xavier Becerra as our state’s Attorney General. At a time when Labor faces unprecedented attacks, we have full confidence in Rep. Becerra’s commitment to fight for fairness for all working families.

California’s Attorney General is the top law enforcement office in protecting workers’ rights. Millions of workers put in long hours at strenuous and dangerous jobs only to find at the end of the week that their paychecks are short. Minimum wage violations, prevailing wage violations, misclassification, off-the-clock overtime, and denial of meal breaks are commonplace in many industries. This is wage theft and nationally it costs workers up to $50 billion a year. It depletes state tax revenue and it deprives good employers of a level playing field. We need an Attorney General who will place labor law enforcement as a top priority.

In addition to needing greater enforcement of basic labor rights, all workers benefit when they are able to come together to push for better working conditions. As we anticipate legislative and judicial attempts to weaken the right to organize and collectively bargain, it is more important than ever that our state defend the gains achieved through collective action.

Rep. Becerra is from a working family, the son of an immigrant, and was the first in his family to go to college. His dad worked as a laborer in the construction industry and experienced the discrimination that was commonplace for Mexican workers in that era. Becerra is well aware of the reality for so many California workers of putting in long hours for low wages, just for the dream of giving your children a better life.
First as a State Assemblyman and then as a Congressman, he has demonstrated his unwavering commitment to giving workers greater economic security. He supported federal minimum wage increases, opposed the overtime take-away, fought trade agreements that would offshore jobs, and supported making it easier for workers to win a voice at work without employer intimidation. He fought to extend overtime pay to homecare workers, pushed for greater retirement security for all workers, and has criticized the corporate challenge to union fair share fees.

California is home to the greatest number of immigrant workers, many of whom are members of our unions and all of whom are made more vulnerable to employer abuses as enforcement efforts escalate. California's labor laws establish that all workers are equally deserving of labor protections and we trust Representative Becerra to hold employers accountable if they exploit workers because of their immigration status.

Representative Xavier Becerra is exceptionally qualified for this job and can aptly handle every aspect of it. From regulating hospital mergers to protecting the public interest, ensuring civil rights and equal protection for all Californians to defending landmark legislation from legal challenge, we have no doubt that he will vigorously defend the interests of working people. In this unique moment in our nation's history, this job will be particularly daunting. Rep. Becerra brings a wealth of experience, wisdom, and knowhow to navigating California's legal landscape in the new national political environment.

For these reasons, we are proud to support the confirmation of Xavier Becerra.

Sincerely,

Art Pulaski
Executive Secretary Treasurer
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OPEIU 29 AFL-CIO

Cc: Committee Members