

February 28, 2022

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Chair of the Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6640
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1126 (Cortese)

Dear Chair Cortese:

On behalf of UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza), I write in support of SB 1126 (Cortese), an act to amend Section 100000 of the Government Code, relating to the CalSavers Retirement Savings Program to include employers of one to five employees. UnidosUS supports amendments to create an exemption for sole proprietorships and self-employed individuals, as well as an extended deadline for newly eligible employers. UnidosUS's research helped inform the development of CalSavers, establishing that California could serve as a model for states seeking to extend retirement savings programs.¹ In our report, *CalSavers—California's State Retirement Savings Program: Promising Approaches for Engaging Latino Workers*, we indicated that 47% of the workers in California who would be eligible for CalSavers are Latino.² Therefore, robust Latino participation is necessary to the program's success.

UnidosUS is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization and has built a stronger country by creating opportunities for Latinos for more than 50 years. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers at the national and local levels.³ The UnidosUS California-based Affiliates include 58 community-based organizations that invest more than \$1.8 billion and employ more than 15,000 staff to provide direct services to approximately 1.8 million Californians annually. UnidosUS is headquartered in Washington, DC, and has an office in Los Angeles and staff in Sacramento. Through partnerships, community investments, and state research and advocacy on housing, health, and education, UnidosUS advances opportunities for the more than 15 million Latinos who call California home.

SB 1126 will expand CalSavers to approximately three-quarters of a million California workers and ensure that virtually all Californians have access to a retirement savings program at their job. The bill would also remove an inequity for the state's smallest employers and allow them to access a no-fee easy tool to aid in employee recruitment and retention.

Operating at no taxpayer expense, CalSavers ensures that all Californians have a path to financial security and dignity in retirement, and UnidosUS supports SB 1126 as a means for strengthening this vital program.

We encourage the committee members to join us in supporting SB 1126. If you have any questions regarding our support, please contact me at elopez@unidosus.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Esmeralda López", enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Esmeralda López
California State Director
Policy and Advocacy
UnidosUS

¹ UnidosUS, CalSavers—California’s State Retirement Savings Program: Promising Approaches for Engaging Latino Workers (Washington, DC: UnidosUS, 2019), https://www.unidosus.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/calsavers_retirementsavings_web.pdf.

² Ibid.

³ UnidosUS, “Our Affiliates,” <https://www.unidosus.org/affiliates/>.