

ANTELOPE VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE
848 W. LANCASTER BLVD., SUITE 101
LANCASTER, CA 93534
TEL (661) 729-6232
FAX (661) 729-1683

VICTOR VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE
14343 CIVIC DRIVE, FIRST FLOOR
VICTORVILLE, CA 92392
TEL (760) 843-8414
FAX (760) 843-8348

SANTA CLARITA DISTRICT OFFICE
23920 VALENCIA BLVD., SUITE 250
SANTA CLARITA, CA 91355
TEL (661) 286-1471
FAX (661) 286-2543

California State Senate

SENATOR
SCOTT WILK

TWENTY-FIRST SENATE DISTRICT



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July 22, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cc: Julie Su
Secretary, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency
800 Capitol Mall, Suite 5000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sharon Hilliard
Director, California Employment Development Department
722 Capitol Mall, Suite 5098
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for expansion of EDD employee workday to address backlog during COVID-19 Crisis

Dear Governor Newsom:

We write to you today with a bipartisan request regarding the backlog and delay in claims processing at the California Employment Development Department (EDD).

While wearing masks, hand-washing and avoiding crowds may help us re-flatten the curve, nothing short of rectifying the backlog at EDD will help the millions of unemployed Californians struggling to put food on the table while waiting for their money to come through. The check's in the mail just doesn't cut it in these unprecedented times.

EDD's long history of technology problems has been exacerbated by the surge of Californians applying for unemployment during the pandemic, but in our opinion, that means the state has to work harder to solve the problem.

As an emergency work around to the failed IT systems at EDD, we respectfully request that you issue an Executive Order to keep EDD phone lines and operations open and fully staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until this backlog is addressed. Your recent orders to re-close much of the state will further exacerbate EDD's failure to address its

current workload and we fear, without drastic actions, the agency will continue to fall further and further behind.

Each of our offices has hundreds of unemployment related constituent case files open as a result of EDD's failure to answer the phone, process a claim, reinstate a claim accidentally dropped and a host of other heartbreaking issues. This is a monumental failure of government when Californians need it most.

While Californians struggle to make ends meet, the very least government can do is put in the man hours necessary to straighten this out. This is frankly not the time to sit back and wait for EDD to catch up. This is the time for decisive action and leadership.

As you are well aware, these are unprecedented times and they call for unprecedented measures to ensure Californians do not fall into financial insecurity. Decisive action and leadership will go a long way to achieving this goal.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wilk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Scott Wilk
21st Senate District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melissa Hurtado". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Melissa Hurtado
14th Senate District

