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January 12, 2021

Rita Saenz
Director
California Employment Development Department
PO Box 826880, MIC 83
Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

Dear Director Saenz,

I write today to urge the timely resumption of payments to my constituents whose benefits were frozen without warning by the Employment Development Department's (EDD) mass suspension of accounts on December 31, 2020.

It is abundantly clear that the EDD is failing at preventing fraud among claimants, but I ask that actions are taken responsibly, with care not to beggar valid claimants. This mass freeze of accounts has led to dozens of constituents reaching out to my office, pleading for assistance that they are not receiving from the EDD. Many received little or no notice prior to the suspension of their benefits.¹ Those given notification are not being immediately provided with the means to resume their payments, with reactivation instructions provided a week after benefit suspension.² Slow processing and response times are jeopardizing my constituents' housing, if not their very lives.³

In light of the current circumstances, I demand answers to the following questions:

1. What steps are you taking to expedite the resumption of payments to Californian's who have unjustly had their accounts suspended?
2. When can those who have submitted valid identification documents expect to receive a response and resumption of their benefits? What are you doing to help those who need immediate assistance now?
3. How is the EDD evaluating fraudulent accounts?
4. What actions is the EDD taking to ensure that a mistake of this scale does not occur again?

¹ *ABC10*, Josh Lyle, [EDD verification for suspended accounts may take more than a month](#), January 9, 2021

² *Los Angeles Times*, Patrick McGreevy, "[California suspends payment on 1.4 million unemployment claims while searching for fraud](#)", January 7, 2021

³ *San Francisco Chronicle*, Carolyn Said, "[After EDD freezes 1.4 million accounts, agency could be swamped by ID verifications](#)", January 7, 2021

It is essential that actions are taken to resume benefits and not further endanger or harm Californians. The rapid resumption of aid immensely impacts both the recovery of our citizens and economy during these difficult months. I look forward to your prompt response and timely action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Harder". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Josh Harder

United States Representative (CA-10)