



Affiliated with UNITE HERE INTERNATIONAL UNION

Gov. Steve Sisolak  
101 N. Carson St.  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Sisolak,

**RE: Adolfo Fernandez Bill**

Last week, the Culinary Union family suffered a painful loss when our union brother, Adolfo Fernandez, contracted COVID-19 after working as a utility porter on the Las Vegas Strip and passed away.

*Adolfo's daughter, Irma, shared some reflections of her father: "My father was an amazing hard-working man. Before he went back to work, he was tested negative for COVID-19. My father would tell me every day 'I'm gonna get sick - the company is not keeping us safe.' He would constantly tell me how stressed out he was. He would call me on his break all the time to tell me about what was going on and how he was feeling. He would say that he didn't want to go back to work, but he had to because he needed to financially support his family. My father always fought for justice and for his coworkers to be respected at work, but now he was taken away to be in heaven. During the last three-days of his life, my dad told me that his last wish was that he wanted justice and better safety precautions for workers."*

19 Culinary Union members and/or their family members have died due to COVID-19 since March 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. Our state can't afford to lose one more hotel and casino worker during this pandemic, which is why we write you today. Last week, you made the difficult, but right decision to mandate masks in public places. It is a great first step to slow the spread of COVID-19, but we believe more work must be done to fully protect Nevada's workers and guests to ensure a full economic recovery.

Nevada has seen a concerning rise of positive tests and hospitalizations in the last few weeks. It's even more troubling that COVID-19 in Nevada is disproportionately effecting communities of color. As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, over 40% of positive COVID-19 cases were from the Latinx community, which is extremely concerning for the Culinary Union as 54% of members we represent are Latinx. These statistics combined with the sudden death of Adolfo Fernandez means that hotel and casino workers are working in fear every day. Workers fear that they will contract the virus and bring it home to their families or possibly die from it. This is an incredible burden that no worker should have to deal with – and this fear is not just limited to Culinary Union members. All hotel and casino workers – union and non-union throughout the state are living with this same fear each day they go to work.

The Culinary Union believes that there are steps that can be taken to alleviate these fears and keep Nevada's workers and guests safe. We have drafted and submitted to your office the *Adolfo Fernandez Bill* that workers are requesting be placed on the agenda for the upcoming Special Legislative Session. The *Adolfo Fernandez Bill* addresses public health and would mandate: Enhanced cleaning procedures, enforce social distancing, free testing for all workers before going back to work or those that have been exposed to COVID-19, temperature-checks for workers, detailed plans of action for when a worker contracts COVID-19 or is exposed to someone with the virus, and enhanced safety training for all employees.

In these uncertain times, it is imperative that we protect Nevada's workers, tourists, and economy. Another economic shutdown could have disastrous effects on our economy which would make recovery even harder. We believe that the measures in the *Adolfo Fernandez Bill* would put Nevada on the path towards a full economic recovery.

The Culinary Union is committed to ensuring that we don't lose one more hotel and casino worker –so we ask you to make the *Adolfo Fernandez Bill* a part of the upcoming special session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoconda Argüello Kline". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Geoconda Argüello-Kline, Secretary-Treasurer for the Culinary Union