

August 19, 2021

Dear Solano County Board of Supervisors,

As an organization that serves all of Solano County, we ask that you allocate some of Solano's American Rescue Plan's Recovery Funds to provide "premium pay" for the essential workers who have been dedicated to keeping our community safe during the pandemic.

As you know, premium pay is authorized by the American Rescue Plan as a way to reward essential workers with up to "\$13 per hour in addition to wages or remuneration the worker otherwise receives and in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$25,000 per eligible worker." These words are from the Department of the Treasury's Interim Rule, which is the federal guidance for State and Local Recovery Funds. This guidance is clear that nonprofit staff whose work providing direct services to people has put them at risk of contracting COVID-19 are one of the intended recipients of premium pay.

Food is Free Solano is on the frontlines of addressing food insecurity in Solano. During the pandemic, our workers have gone above and beyond to respond to this aspect of the pandemic's "public health emergency." Throughout the County, the staff of our organization and others have risked their own health and safety to serve as front-line workers delivering food, PPE, and other essential services to people who lack access to vital resources.

The Department of Treasury provides two ways for governments to disburse premium pay to eligible essential workers. Recovery Funds can either be appropriated to government agencies to administer or they can be granted to third party nonprofit agencies to provide premium pay to eligible staff or contractors. We recognize that just as the pandemic has put unprecedented burdens on our communities, so it has strained the resources and staff of our government. We stand ready to work with your administration to create an accountable and efficient way to administer these payments.

On behalf of Food is Free Solano and any other eligible local nonprofits, we thank you and your administration for the work you have done during the pandemic. We are asking for retroactive premium pay for Food is Free Solano workers (and other local nonprofits) who have repeatedly risked their own health to provide necessary services to our community. We urge you to follow Congress's intent and provide nonprofit public health, safety, and human services frontline staff with the premium pay they deserve for their essential work and the sacrifices they have made to keep our community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Heather Pierini

Heather Pierini
Director, Food is Free Solano