



# URGENT ITEM AGENDA MATERIAL

Government Code Section 54954.2(b)  
Rules of Procedure Chapter III.C.5

**THIS ITEM IS NOT YET AGENDIZED AND MAY OR MAY NOT BE  
ACCEPTED FOR THE AGENDA AS A LATE ITEM, SUBJECT TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL'S DISCRETION ACCORDING TO BROWN ACT RULES**

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Item Description:** \_\_\_\_\_

This item is submitted pursuant to the provision checked below:

Emergency Situation (54954.2(b)(1) - majority vote required)

*Determination by a majority vote of the legislative body that an emergency situation exists, as defined in Section 54956.5.*

Immediate Action Required (54954.2(b)(2) - two-thirds vote required)

*There is a need to take immediate action and the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda for this meeting being posted.*

Once the item is added to the agenda (Consent or Action) it must be passed by the standard required vote threshold (majority, two-thirds, or 7/9).

**Facts supporting the addition of the item to the agenda under Section 54954.2(b) and Chapter III.C.5 of the Rules of Procedure:**

In the past week we have seen an alarming spike in the number of Covid-19 positive cases clustered in students living in congregate housing. This item asks Council to send a letter to UC Berkeley Chancellor Carol Christ urging her to consider the health and safety of the greater Berkeley community, and the resources necessary to manage potential additional COVID outbreaks when making Fall semester 2020 plans.



Susan Wengraf  
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR  
July 14, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Wengraf (author) Vice Mayor Hahn (author)  
Subject: Letter to UC Berkeley Chancellor Christ re: COVID and Fall 2020 Plans

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to UC Berkeley Chancellor Carol Christ urging her to consider the health and safety of the greater Berkeley community and the resources necessary to manage potential additional COVID outbreaks when making Fall semester 2020 plans.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

BACKGROUND

In the past week we have seen an alarming spike in the number of Covid-19 positive cases clustered in students living in congregate housing. Contact tracing has confirmed that in these cases, the virus was spread as a result of large groups of young people in close proximity to each other, not taking the precautions that have been recommended by the State of California, the CDC, the WHO and Berkeley's Health Officer.

The residents, organizations and businesses of Berkeley have made enormous personal and economic sacrifices to keep each other safe during the pandemic, with very good results. We "flattened the curve," and have been able to limit spread of the disease to a very small number of residents.

To continue to preserve the health and safety of our community, we ask the Chancellor to consider if it is possible to ensure that all students adhere to social distancing, masking and other necessary actions to limit the spread of COVID-19. The letter asks specific additional questions to be considered while making Fall 2020 plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

None

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Wengraf

Council District 6

510-981-7160

Attachments: Letter



Tuesday, July 14, 2020

Dear Chancellor Christ,

The Berkeley City Council writes to you today with a sense of urgency and concern regarding UC Berkeley's plans for the Fall semester of 2020.

In the past week we have seen an alarming spike in the number of Covid-19 positive cases clustered in students living in congregate housing. Contact tracing has confirmed that in these cases, the virus was spread as a result of large groups of young people in close proximity to each other, not taking the precautions that have been recommended by the State of California, the CDC, the WHO and Berkeley's Health Officer.

We know that of paramount importance to you is your responsibility and focus to keep your students, faculty and staff safe from this deadly virus. As you deliberate on your plans, we ask that you broaden your perspective and also consider the health and safety of the greater Berkeley community, and the resources necessary to manage potential additional outbreaks.

The residents, organizations and businesses of Berkeley have made enormous personal and economic sacrifices to keep each other safe during the pandemic, with very good results. We "flattened the curve," and have been able to limit spread of the disease to a very small number of residents. To continue to preserve the health and safety of our community, we ask that you also consider the following in making your plans:

Given the very social and interactive nature of the college experience, is it possible to ensure that all students will adhere to social distancing, masking and other necessary actions to limit the spread of COVID-19?

What plans, protocols, and monitoring and enforcement mechanisms can be put in place to support adherence to all required safety protocols on an ongoing basis?

How can the arrival of students in Berkeley be managed to ensure proper testing, quarantines, and other measures so that students don't get sick themselves, or spread illness to other students, faculty, staff and the broader community?

How will UC Berkeley and the community provide adequate medical care, food, isolation opportunities, moral support and monitoring students who may fall ill, both those in dormitories and other congregate living, as well as those in private apartments?

How will students new to Berkeley and UC Berkeley be able to furnish and supply their living spaces and access food and other necessities if they are under quarantine on arrival, or in the event they fall ill soon after arrival?

What models exist to estimate the number of infections that might occur over a limited period of time with this age group, typical college living arrangements, and foreseeable social and other age-appropriate behaviors?

What is the local capacity for testing, contact tracing and other necessary public health measures to address a potential outbreak, and how will these services be paid for?

Since the UC population is reliant on area hospitals, will hospitals have the capacity to treat your students, if they should require it?

What assurance can you provide to the residents of Berkeley that re-opening the campus, even in a hybrid format, will not become a risk factor to the health and safety of our neighborhoods, businesses and the greater community?

Thanking you, in advance, for your attention to these very serious matters.

Berkeley City Council