AGENDA NO.

December 19, 2023

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

Silicosis Prevention Education

Silicosis is an occupational lung disease caused by inhalation of respirable crystalline silica (RCS) which mainly affects workers exposed to silica dust in occupations such as construction and stone fabrication. Silica is a ubiquitous mineral found in nature and many construction materials including sand, stone, concrete, and artificial stone, among other materials used for construction and industrial purposes. Cutting, grinding, chipping, sanding, drilling, finishing, or polishing of these products can release dangerous levels of silica dust into the air that workers breathe. Engineered stone has the most crystalline silica so it can produce higher levels of silica dust. Most of the engineered stone products being imported and sold in the United States today may contain as much as 95% silica. In comparison, granite, a popular design choice for kitchen and bath countertops in the 1990s contains on average 50% silica or less. For further contrast, natural stones such as marble can contain on average only 2% silica.

Workplace exposure to silica dust (RCS) causes lung inflammation, stiffening, and scarring, which can lead to severe lung disease and difficulty breathing. Silicosis is irreversible and progressive, but entirely preventable. The disease typically takes 10 - 30 years to develop, although it can develop sooner if a person has high exposure to silica dust. There is no cure besides a lung transplant, which costs more than $1.3 million and may only extend survival on

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average for five years post-transplant. Additional health effects of silica dust exposure include other pulmonary diseases; chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), malignancies, infections like Tuberculosis and non-tuberculous mycobacterium, autoimmune diseases, and renal disease.

Los Angeles County Olive View - UCLA Medical Center has seen a significant increase of workers presenting with symptoms of the respiratory disease, over the past 18 months. The San Fernando Valley has become ground zero for silicosis cases in Los Angeles County because hundreds of engineered stone-cutting and fabrication businesses have concentrated in the region. Patients identified in Los Angeles are all males and nearly all are Latino immigrant men with the majority being between 40-49 years old (some as young as in their late 20s) with an average work tenure cutting and fabricating stone of 15 years at diagnosis. The breadth of this situation is not fully understood as cases are increasing with a time lag following prolonged exposure and increasing popularity of engineered stone products.

On June 6, 2023, the Board unanimously approved the motion “Silicosis Prevention and Care”. Over the last few months, the Department of Public Health (DPH) has convened meetings with stakeholders, collaborated with State partners, and engaged in outreach, education and training initiatives with stone fabrication businesses, workers, and community in the highly impacted San Fernando Valley.

On July 20, 2023, the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board granted a petition of a medical association for California Division of Occupational Safety and Health

(Cal/OSHA) to develop emergency temporary standards (ETS) to address increasing cases of advanced silicosis among workers in engineered stone fabrication shops by implementing stricter safety standards and protocols to prevent exposure to silica dust. DPH has engaged with Cal/OSHA, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Chief Executive Office's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (CEO-LAIR) Branch coordinated briefings for state elected officials, including State Senator Caroline Menjivar and State Assemblymember Luz Rivas, as it relates to the ETS development and implementation. Additionally, through a partnership between DPH, and the UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (LOSH), outreach to workers, employers and community has been leveraged, including DPH outreach efforts to stone fabrication businesses on Cal/OSHA's list, as well as additional fabrication businesses identified through outreach work, to provide education materials and support.

Through a Liberty Hill Foundation grant, Pacoima Beautiful (PB) was contracted to conduct cultural and linguistically appropriate workplace and community outreach, and to distribute outreach materials to stone fabrication shops, workers in the industry, and community in the San Fernando Valley. On September 27, 2022, the Board approved continuation of sole source Community Engagement and Related Services Master Agreement Work Order (MAWO) with Liberty Hill Foundation, a fiscal sponsor for several agencies providing education, outreach, and technical assistance for the Public Health Councils program. Delegated authority under the September 27, 2022 Board letter ends on December 31, 2023. PB is one of the agencies under

this MAWO. To ensure that this important work continues authority for a continued contract and funding must be authorized before January 1, 2024.

PB's contract calls for conducting intensive outreach and education from June 2023 through December 2023, with activities including:

- Distributing educational print and electronic materials to community residents, workers, houses of worship, schools and community-based organizations.
- Organizing, leading and attending meetings with key community stakeholders to raise awareness about COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases among at-risk worker populations; educating participants about who is impacted and why; and increasing understanding of prevention strategies.
- Conducting listening sessions to solicit insights from workers regarding effective social media messaging strategies to inform future DPH led social media campaign.
- Identifying effective strategies for reaching and engaging workers and their families and communities.

PB is a trusted environmental justice non-profit community organization with a mission to provide education, impact local policy, and support local arts and culture, in order to promote a healthy and sustainable San Fernando Valley. To date, PB has hosted seven community events on silicosis education, reached 1,150 people, and disseminated 5,100 leaflets/informational packets about silicosis. PB has also visited over one hundred fabrication shops in the San

Fernando Valley and distributed masks to workers. Additionally, they have conducted a listening session with workers that will help inform written recommendations (expected December 2023), which DPH will extrapolate to develop a social and ethnic media campaign to increase community awareness of silicosis and encourage stone cutting fabricators to seek medical care if symptomatic.

Worker education and engagement needs to continue to be a priority, especially for workers that are independent contractors or involved with smaller business operations. Furthermore, workers need to be aware of silicosis, proper use of PPE, and when to receive screening and seek medical treatment. Community partners such as PB need to continue efforts to raise awareness of silicosis and RCS prevention strategies for workplaces and inform workers on how to access support services such as health care, mental health, and workforce development. There has been a significant investment of time and training over the past three months, and it would be highly beneficial to continue that momentum into 2024.

Although the San Fernando Valley has been most impacted by silicosis diagnosis, education and engagement must be done throughout Los Angeles County, and investments must be made to leverage the ETS campaign and educate and engage all fabrication shops, workers and community throughout the County.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Delegate authority to the Director of the DPH or designee to execute agreements or to amend agreements including sole source agreements for silicosis education,

prevention, and outreach and related activities; to increase funds to existing agreements for these purposes; to extend the term through December 31, 2024 of existing agreements; to allow for a twelve-month no cost extension to December 31, 2025 of existing agreements; and execute further amendments as required as long as funding is available.

2. Approve the attached appropriation adjustment that increases services and supplies by $500,000 in DPH's operating budget, fully offset by the cancellation of $500,000 in the Obligated Fund Balance Committed for Health Services - Tobacco Settlement to provide silicosis outreach and education in the San Fernando Valley and throughout the County.

3. Direct DPH to continue collaboration with the CDPH and the Cal/OSHA by participating in the ETS process to improve workplace safety standards on silica and enhance business outreach; and to continue engaging stone fabrication businesses on the Cal/OSHA list and fabrication shops identified through outreach and share knowledge with Cal/OSHA.

4. Direct the Department of Mental Health (DMH) in collaboration with DPH, the Department of Health Services (DHS) and others as needed to develop and/or use existing resources and support materials in English and Spanish, to be made available for individuals diagnosed with silicosis and their families, including exploring opportunities to use the Mental Health Outpatient Clinic located on the Olive View

campus to provide mental health support.

5. Direct DEO-Office of Small Business to convene representatives from DPH, Pacoima Beautiful, the Western States Regional Council of Carpenters, the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council, relevant LA County America's Job Centers of California (AJCC), Industry trade groups and other relevant stakeholders to discuss and coordinate additional outreach strategies to stone fabrication businesses and provide small business resources, as well as learn about what barriers exist that are preventing compliance with required safety protocols and use of personal protective equipment.

6. Direct CEO-LAIR, in collaboration with County Counsel, DPH, and DHS to continue to advocate in support of proposals at the state and federal levels that strengthen regulatory standards and enhance resources for the enforcement of regulations on silica dust to ensure better compliance, as well as provide options for improving education (for employers, workers, and consumers), and better enforcement of regulations.

7. Direct DPH in collaboration with CEO-LAIR, County Counsel, DMH, DHS, DEO and other County Departments as needed to continue engaging stakeholders, and report back to the Board in writing in 60 days, and quarterly thereafter, on progress and updates on the directives listed above and any other recommendations that may arise as it relates to the prevention and intervention of silicosis.

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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December 19, 2023

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

REQUEST FOR APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER:

THE FOLLOWING APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENT IS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THIS DEPARTMENT. PLEASE CONFIRM THE ACCOUNTING ENTRIES AND AVAILABLE BALANCES AND FORWARD TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR HER RECOMMENDATION OR ACTION.

ADJUSTMENT REQUESTED AND REASONS THEREFORE
FY 2023-24
4 - VOTES

SOURCES		USES	
GENERAL FUND		**PUBLIC HEALTH**	
A01-3096		A01-PH-2000-24500	
COMMITTED FOR HEALTH SERVICES-TOBACCO SETTLEMENT		SERVICES & SUPPLIES	
DECREASE OBLIGATED FUND BALANCE	**500,000**	**INCREASE APPROPRIATION**	**500,000**
SOURCES TOTAL	**$ 500,000**	**USES TOTAL**	**$ 500,000**

JUSTIFICATION

Reflects a one-time transfer of $500,000 from the Committed for Health Services - Tobacco Settlement funds set aside as obligated fund balance to provide silicosis outreach and education in the San Fernando Valley and throughout the County.

Erika Bonilla Digitally signed by Erika Bonilla Date: 2023.12.06 16:51:49 -08'00'

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE ERIKA BONILLA, MANAGER, CEO

BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL (AS REQUESTED/REVISED)

REFERRED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR---

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

B.A. NO. 059

☐ ACTION

☑ RECOMMENDATION

BY Andrea Turner Digitally signed by Andrea Turner Date: 2023.12.06 17:43:21 -08'00'

DATE 12/6/23

☑ APPROVED AS REQUESTED

☐ APPROVED AS REVISED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BY Yolanda Reyes Digitally signed by Yolanda Reyes Date: 2023.12.07 08:28:35 -08'00'

DATE 12/7/23