



For Immediate Release: December 21, 2020

Contact: Mayra Bernabe / 831.786.6520 / mbernabe93@gmail.com

Monterey County Board of Supervisors unanimously approves COPA proposal, a \$4.9M pilot program targeting the neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID

Proposal for community-based health workers and coordinated care

Central Coast -- On Monday, December 21, 2020, during a special meeting, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a nearly \$5 million six month Community Outreach & Education pilot program that will target the neighborhoods hit the hardest by COVID-19. This program will hire 100 community health workers, or *promotorx*, trusted people from community-based organizations starting January 1. The trained community health workers will do outreach, prevention education, promote testing, and navigation to support services using a culturally and linguistically appropriate joint problem solving approach. Essentially, these workers will help educate families, as well as connect people who test positive with needed services, such as temporary housing for quarantine or isolation, cash assistance, food, medical care and information about employment rights. It will use the Census tracts to target the hardest hit communities.

The proposal approved today was created by COPA's "Breaking the Chain" team, based on more than 2,000 conversations with families in Monterey County impacted by COVID-19. The pilot program is similar to programs in Fresno, Sonoma, and San Diego Counties.

COPA's 28 member institutions have heard stories about the need for rental assistance, access to testing, tracing, and supported isolation in this time of pandemic, and access to education and distance learning resources. Stories were shared from COPA members on their struggles to live and work in the Monterey Bay Region during this time of the novel Coronavirus.

Many organizations spoke in support of the proposal including Building Healthy Communities, Center for Community Advocacy, California Rural Legal Assistance, the Monterey County Farm Bureau, The Catholic Diocese, the Hospitality Industry Association, and several others.

Founded in 2003, COPA is a broad-based, non-partisan membership organization working on issues affecting our families, neighborhoods, and communities. The 28 member institutions include faith communities, nonprofits, schools, and labor associations from throughout Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties.

www.copaiaf.org

###