



August 14, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
 Governor, State of California  
 State Capitol  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

These are truly unprecedented and challenging times. Millions of Californians are unemployed, small businesses in our communities are shuttering their doors, and families are struggling to pay their bills in a state with some of the highest costs of living in the nation.

**We are writing you today to ask for your opposition to Prop 15**, the largest property tax increase in state history. Prop 15 comes at the worst possible time for minority communities and businesses who are already bearing a disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

Prop 15 will require business properties to be reassessed to market value at least every three years. According to the [nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office](#), Prop 15 will hit businesses with up to \$12.5 billion in annual new property taxes. It's no surprise though, that all Californians will pay for the tax hike through higher costs for everything we buy – from higher prices for food and fuel, to health care and day care. Even worse, there are no protections in Prop 15 for small minority-owned businesses.

Right now, our communities are struggling to survive. Black-owned businesses have been devastated by the current economy. Data analyzed by the [Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research](#) found a 41 percent drop nationwide in the number of Black business owners between February and April 2020. Latino-owned businesses sunk by 32 percent and Asian-owned businesses decreased by 26 percent. Despite these staggering numbers, Prop 15 will raise rents on the surviving businesses during an unprecedented economic crisis.

A [study by the California State Conference of the NAACP](#) found that Prop 15's massive tax increase will disproportionately hurt minority-owned businesses and exacerbate the gentrification of our long-time neighborhoods. During these trying times, we need to uplift our communities and Prop 15 will do the exact opposite.

**We're asking you to stand with us and oppose Proposition 15.** If this measure passes, there is no doubt that it will make income inequality worse by driving up the cost of living for just about everything we need and use, like food, utilities, daycare and healthcare. Higher costs will hurt minority and low-income families the most. Given the economic hardship many Californians are facing, now is not the time to raise the cost of living.

The last thing our families need right now is an even higher cost of living.

Please join us and oppose Proposition 15.

Sincerely,



**Edwin Lombard**  
President and CEO,  
California Black Chamber  
of Commerce



**Pat Fong Kushida**  
President and CEO,  
California Asian Pacific  
Islander Chamber of  
Commerce



**Alice Huffman**  
President,  
California Conference of  
the NAACP

California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce  
Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce  
Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce  
Black Business Association  
Silicon Valley Black Chamber of Commerce  
Antelope Valley Black Chamber of Commerce  
Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce