



San Mateo Labor Council

OFFICE OF THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1153 Chess Dr. #200
Foster City, CA

TEL: (650) 572-8848

July 13, 2022

Mr. James Conforti
Interim President and Chief Executive Officer
Sutter Health
2200 River Plaza Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833

Dear Mr. Conforti:

I am writing on behalf of the members of the San Mateo Labor Council to share with you the resolution they adopted Monday in support of the reopening of the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool for community use. This wheelchair-accessible, warm water pool is the only fully accessible facility on the Peninsula.

Our members can attest to the benefits of the pool, which serves as an invaluable resource for chronic pain management and rehabilitation for seniors, disabled individuals, patients recovering from surgeries, children with special needs, and pregnant women. Lack of access to the pool since it was closed in March 2020 due to the pandemic has led former pool users to suffer from diminished physical, emotional, and mental health.

We understand that the pool was entirely financed by \$4 million in community donations (equivalent to over \$7 million in today's dollars) more than 25 years ago. Ongoing community support for reopening the pool is evidenced by the City Councils in Belmont, Burlingame, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae San Carlos and San Mateo, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, and the Sequoia Healthcare District Board all passing or in the process of passing resolutions of support. State Senator Josh Becker, Assemblymember Kevin Mullin, various San Mateo County Commissions, and local physicians have also sent letters encouraging Sutter Health to reverse its decision to permanently close this important facility.

The Peninsula Health Care District has offered to pay for any necessary upgrades and operating costs to reopen the Mickelson pool until a new therapy pool becomes available, but this offer has been declined. On behalf of our 90,000 members living and working in this community, I strongly encourage you to reverse this decision and reopen the pool as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Lind". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Julie Lind, Chief Officer/Executive Secretary-Treasurer
San Mateo Labor Council

Enclosure

Sutter Health Board of Directors

c: Peninsula Healthcare District Board of Directors Lindsay
Raiké, Chief Executive Officer, Warm Water Wellness
Joseph W. Cotchett, Esquire

SAN MATEO LABOR COUNCIL RESOLUTION RE: MICKELSON CENTER THERAPEUTIC POOL

RESOLUTION CALLING ON SUTTER HEALTH TO REOPEN THE MACK E. MICKELSON ARTHRITIS AND REHABILITATION CENTER THERAPY POOL FOR COMMUNITY USE AT THE MILLS HEALTH CENTER IN SAN MATEO, CA WITH THE SAME OPEN ACCESS HOURS THAT WERE IN PLACE PRIOR TO JANUARY 2020

WHEREAS, the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool is a fully accessible warm water therapy pool operated by Sutter Health and located at the Mills Health Center, in San Mateo, California; and

WHEREAS, the Mickelson Therapy Pool was constructed over 25 years ago using charitable contributions from residents of San Mateo County to serve as a centerpiece of an arthritis center created by Mills Peninsula; and

WHEREAS, the Mickelson Therapy Pool has been used for over 25 years by thousands of residents of San Mateo County who suffer from a broad range of health issues, including permanent disabilities, debilitating injuries, autoimmune disorders, work-related injuries, and mobility impairments, to rehabilitate those health issues and mitigate physical decline; and

WHEREAS, Mickelson Therapy Pool has historically provided both preventative and interventionist therapies to residents of San Mateo County suffering from health issues; and

WHEREAS, there is also an apparent and growing need for the services provided by the Mickelson Therapy Pool, due to San Mateo County's rapidly increasing number of elderly residents who are highly likely to suffer from health issues requiring a warm water therapy pool; and

WHEREAS, Mickelson Therapy Pool is the only pool of its kind on the Peninsula, and there are no comparable warm water therapy pools that can adequately accommodate the residents of San Mateo County who previously relied upon Mickelson Therapy Pool and who are now suffering from acute and chronic physical pain and mental anguish without it; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the critical need for the facility, in June 2021, Sutter Health announced that it would permanently close the Mickelson Therapy Pool to independent use by patrons and closing Mickelson removes a valuable healthcare resource for people to assist them in daily activities; and

WHEREAS, over 4,600 patients, caregivers, and community members have signed a petition to reopen the Mickelson Therapy Pool in order to increase the health, independence, and dignity of residents who rely upon it; and

WHEREAS, Sutter Health, its subsidiaries and affiliated entities receive significant financial benefits from their operations in San Mateo County and this Labor Council is aware that warm water therapy pools in the region are able to operate profitably and safely, including under COVID-19 protocols; and

WHEREAS, in light of the foregoing, this Labor Council believes that Sutter Health should be called upon to reopen the Mickelson Therapy Pool and to maintain the same open access hours that were in place prior to January 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the San Mateo Labor Council recognizes that promptly reopening the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool for community use with the same open access hours that it had prior to January of 2020 would preserve and improve the health of residents in San Mateo County who have historically relied upon it or who could benefit from warm water therapy to maintain their health, independence, and dignity.

Approved July 11, 2022