



Notes on Convening 1: Initial Proposals

This document is a summary of the proposals that emerged from the first convening of the California Future of Work Commission (September 10–11, 2019). It is a working document to guide the team in quickly reviewing the key guidance from the commissioners and experts. Proposed responses to these issues will be compiled throughout the Commission process. They can become part of a portfolio of recommendations, as described by Commissioner Roy Bahat, that include a range of responses that are a mix of: short-term, medium-term, and long-term solutions; some more complex than others; legislative actions and recommendations to be implemented by other actors; and some that may seem especially ambitious.

The Commission collectively developed the following design principles to create and evaluate recommendations.

Bold | nothing should be excluded on the basis of political feasibility

Forward-Facing | let's not solve for the last war

Work-Adjacent | include work plus housing, transportation, living

Context-Sensitive | take into account implications across gender, race, age, geography
Coalition-Building: bring together multiple stakeholders

Portfolio-Based | easy/fast to hard/long-term

Scalable | achieve high impact

Agile and Iterative | can be prototyped and adapted as needed

Measurable | identify clear areas of potential impact

Actionable and Practical | grounded in real-world solutions that can be implemented

The proposals are organized into six substantive areas:

- 1 **Equitable Distribution of Wealth**
- 2 **Quality Jobs for Quality Lives**
- 3 **Worker Rights in a Data-Driven Future**
- 4 **An Engaged, Adaptable, and Sustainable Workforce**
- 5 **Technological Augmentation and Disruption**
- 6 **A New Social Compact for Work**



1 | Equitable Distribution of Wealth

- ▶ Regulate/intervene in monopsony to reverse the concentration of hiring power in hands of a few and ensure that the labor market is competitive and fair
- ▶ Rethink taxes: including how wealth is taxed, and how to use tax incentives for corporations to solve for livable wages and 'high road' employment practices
- ▶ Establish new economic institutions designed to rebalance economic power, including new forms of cooperative labor and collective bargaining designed especially for novel employment contexts like the gig economy
- ▶ Set standards for CEO pay designed to reduce the extreme gap between CEO & worker pay
- ▶ Support innovation that addresses distribution as well as productivity
- ▶ Promote accessibility, processes, and institutions to increase worker access to their legislators and political leaders
- ▶ Address the large and persistent racial and gender wealth gaps

2 | Quality Jobs for Quality Lives

- ▶ Create a Quality Jobs Fund that makes capital available to businesses that meet job quality benchmarks.
- ▶ Address fissuring of work
- ▶ Address high cost of health care to workers
- ▶ Regulate indirect employer liability for safe workplaces
- ▶ Raise wages and address cost of living
- ▶ Strengthen enforcement of employment law, especially with subcontractors
- ▶ Address misclassification of workers
- ▶ Develop policies that enhance full employment
- ▶ Integrate assumptions about remote work into policies
- ▶ Invest in home care/childcare work
- ▶ Develop strategies to make higher-paid jobs a greater portion of future job growth

3 | Worker Rights in a Data-Driven Future

- ▶ Set new standards of transparency
- ▶ Establish a coherent policy of data rights:
 - Like consumers, workers should be able to see the data that is gathered about them
 - They should be able to petition to amend their data
 - They should be able to take their data to another job
 - They should know when and how it's being used
- Workers should have a voice in the way that data and algorithms are being introduced and used in an organization
- There should be clear, government-sanctioned channels for seeking redress when algorithms cause direct or indirect worker harm
- For key workplace technologies, algorithmic impact assessments should be required and made accessible to workers
- Workers should derive financial benefit from the intellectual property built on data gathered from their workplace activities, even that gathered at an aggregate (or meta-data) level

4 | An Engaged, Adaptable, and Sustainable Workforce

- ▶ Increase union density across the state
- ▶ Strengthen sectoral or supply chain bargaining to build both worker voice and benefits throughout an industry rather than in individual companies
- ▶ Set standards for worker voice in evolving corporate forms that redefine corporate purpose—for example, as proposed by Business Roundtable
- ▶ Design new institutional frameworks for skills and job certification, perhaps in the form of a certification “utility”
- ▶ Focus on policies that eliminate occupational segregation as a result of explicit or implicit biases built into career tracks
- ▶ Create new SEC accounting practices to value human capital on the balance sheet
- ▶ Ensure a skilled workforce for California’s needs

5 | Technological Augmentation and Disruption

- ▶ Prioritize processes for designing and implementing “guardrails” for new technologies in the workforce with full worker participation rather than legislating specific solutions to technologies that are likely to change rapidly
- ▶ Set social expectations for technology, often reframing both the tools and the work, with enforcement of rules appropriate to the new contexts
- ▶ Invest public funding in small-scale iterative experiments with labor as a design, implementation, and governance partner
- ▶ Mandate worker representation in work environments driven by algorithms, including education to make the algorithms understandable to workers
- ▶ Create a California Office of Technology Assessment to connect policymakers to domain experts in both technological developments and their social impacts
- ▶ Establish an FDA-like agency for regulating algorithms, with a special focus on evaluating the transparency of these “black box” technologies and providing insight and guidance for businesses and workers to leverage these tools

6 | A New Social Compact for Workers

- ▶ Expand public investment in childcare, home care, and early education to make these necessities more affordable and accessible to low-wage workers while also increasing the wage floor of workers in these high-growth but currently low-wage sectors
- ▶ Rethink the social safety net for aging workers
- ▶ Re-examine tax policies regarding capital expenditures vs. payroll, giving companies the same kinds of tax benefits for hiring more workers, sharing revenue from automation-driven productivity gains, and workforce training as they receive for capital expenses
- ▶ Provide low-cost capital to companies with “high-road” employment policies. How can the state partner with private investment to offer growth capital to companies that create and nurture good jobs?

