

NFIB CA Leadership Council members and Sales Leaders,

I come to you with an extremely heavy heart and tremendous sadness as I share with you that this past week, one of our most amazing, dedicated NFIB California LC members and small business leaders, Alzada Knickerbocker, went home to be with the Lord. She passed away last Tuesday, October 20, from natural causes.

Alzada had just recently sold her iconic bookstore, The Avid Reader in Davis, which she had opened in 1987 - truly taking her light-bulb idea and passion for books and education and turning it into her dream small business. And then in the early 2000's, she opened other stores across the street from the Capitol, near The Tower on Broadway in Sacramento, and in recent years, when others were closing their businesses and laying people off, Alzada actually expanded her company, opening The Active Reader, a children's interactive educational shop, down the street from her original store.

As I was explaining to Tim Goodrich the other day, and I'm sure all of you who knew her would agree, Alzada was truly "the small business owner's small business owner." She absolutely adored living her life as a "mom and pop" owner, and doing all that she could to tell her story and help make things better for her Main Street brothers and sisters across the community, state and nation.

To say Alzada was a dedicated leader and activist within our NFIB family would be a vast understatement. We were poised to commemorate her 30 years of service to NFIB with a certificate this year in person, had all of this craziness not happened, and I'm so sorry we did not get that opportunity. I can tell you, and again, you all will recall, whenever we had something going on that was small business related, Alzada was there.

- Always ready to walk the Capitol building and make her views known, holding a pre-written script of her comments for each legislator, Member of Congress and policymaker so she could convey it clearly.
- Always, willing to talk to the media - TV, radio (joined me on many occasions for Phil Cowan and other shows), print articles and more. We as a staff used to joke that, because she was such a valued commodity, we feared we were "OD'ing on Alzada with the Press" - but that is because she was always willing to tell her brick and mortar story with a smile but a firm set of words that communicated why what she - and all of you - do matters.
- Always willing to contribute to our PAC, attend political functions here and across the US. One of the most vivid memories I have is of Alzada sitting literally a ruler's-length away from President Trump at the front table when he spoke before us at the 75th Anniversary in DC. I can still see that wide grin, and remember her still glowing hours

later on the boat ride to Mt. Vernon. She loved her country, Republican and free enterprise values, and loved her President and leaders who fought for small business.

- She always made time to help our field sales reps - I know on many occasions, she would sit with the sales reps - Rick Johnson and others - and give them referrals, join them for in-person meetings with other small biz prospects in Davis and Sac, and do ride-alongs. And I know she was great at some of our "Best of the Best" phone bank events in SF and elsewhere. Always making sure we were growing as an NFIB organization.
- And in recent months, as some of you (Darrell and Denise) may know, she took it upon herself to interview some of you to capture your narratives of your business start-up history, your passion and, more recently, your struggles and perseverance during these uncertain COVID new normal times. She had recently informed us that she was taking a hiatus from this project to concentrate on activities with her local GOP headquarters and for local candidates and writing on issues of importance to her, not the least of which was the Constitution. I've also attached [something she wrote](#) for the Davis Enterprise on Constitution Day - what a great set of words.

Alzada was the very first "NFIB'er" that I ever met. When I was selected for this great honor to be CA Director, my predecessor, Martyn Hopper, also a Davis resident, walked me to The Avid Reader to meet Alzada after lunch. I was simply overwhelmed by her wonderful demeanor - calm, smart, passionate, welcoming, and focused- and the bookstore community she had created. The Avid Read isn't just a bookstore - it's a place where students, families, neighbors come to sit, read, do book readings, share thoughts, and congregate. I'm sure that has slightly tapered in recent months, but I know that will resume soon. What a legacy Alzada has left and an example she sets for so many of us

I've attached the [beautiful obituary](#) from the Davis Enterprise which really eloquently captures the rich life of this wonderful lady. She truly loved her Lord and always made a point to talk about the importance of God in her life and how much it sustained her and gave her meaning and focus, and second to that was her pride in her son, Alex, grandchildren, and her extended Avid Reader, NFIB and other community families. And I know she loved her dogs which always sat at her feet on the second floor of her business, loyally waiting to be given love. And that's what Alzada always did - give her love to all of us, every minute of the day. And as she so aptly summed things up in that recent email to Taylor and me, "I ... remain a strong and enthusiastic believer in the mission and work of NFIB on both the state and national level."

I'll miss that dear, sweet, passionate, fierce small biz fighter, and most important, incredible friend to me, all of us, NFIB and the small business cause. There will be service in memory

of Alzada at the Davis Cemetery tomorrow, Friday - I'm awaiting more details, and as soon as I get them will let you know. And in the obit, there is information about how to give to two important Alzada causes, the Yolo County SPCA and Christ the Redeemer Church.

Thank you for your love, and your prayers, thoughts and memories about this most blessed friend and family member to NFIB and the small business community - and so many more.

We'll miss you, Alzada!

John