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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

September 17, 2020

The Honorable Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
1431 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Carbajal:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of H.R. 7947, the *Supporting Foster Youth & Families through the Pandemic Act*.

The County supports efforts to maintain and enhance safety net services that protect the most vulnerable within a community, including child welfare services, adoptions, and foster care. H.R. 7947 would protect these at-risk populations by providing additional temporary supports and flexibilities for older foster youth, grandparents and other kinship families, home visiting for pregnant and parenting families, and other child welfare services through the end of FY 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented difficulties for all Americans, but foster youth have faced more challenges, often without reliable or stable adults and other supports in their lives. The pandemic has exacerbated the existing foster parent shortage and placed added strain on children, families, and their service providers. H.R. 7947 would provide immediate relief and support during the pandemic for vulnerable foster youth, their caregivers, and families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

DWG: awg