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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
SH-331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of the *Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act*.

Santa Barbara County works in partnership with cities and community organizations to address homelessness. The County seeks funding support to implement effective strategies to address homeless issues of replacement, including financing a comprehensive system of housing, sheltering services and treatment to help prevent homelessness. The *Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act* includes several provisions to help meet these goals, including authorizing \$1 billion annually to fund supportive housing models that provide comprehensive services and intensive case management.

In the County each year more than 6,300 people experience homelessness; on any given night, nearly 2,000 people are homeless. Of the people who are homeless, 23 percent or as many as 450 people are chronically homeless. Addressing homelessness early on and implementing preventative services and strategies, using a coordinated and specialized support to homeless individuals at greatest risk, can result in significant cost savings to local government. Chronically homeless people may consume more than 50 percent of all the services provided to homeless people, such as hospital emergency rooms, mental health crisis services, and criminal justice system, due to their continued movement through the service system without obtaining the help they need.

Thank you for your leadership in providing the resources needed to help end homelessness.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

DWG: awg