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PRESS RELEASE

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ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENT OF NEW COUNTY FIRE CHIEF

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – Today, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors approved the appointment of Mark A. Hartwig as the next Fire Chief of the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. This announcement comes after a months-long competitive selection process and several rounds of interviews.

Since 2011, Hartwig has served as Fire Chief of the San Bernardino County Fire District, leading a department of 1,065 employees, 70 fire stations and covering 10 incorporated cities and 60 unincorporated communities. He was recognized as the 2017 California Fire Chief of the Year by the California State Fire Chiefs' Association, and was appointed by then-Governor Brown to the California Commission on Emergency Medical Services on which he continues to serve. His first official day as Santa Barbara County Fire Chief will be February 18, 2019, where he will oversee a department of 16 fire stations, two battalions, three divisions and about 245 full-time employees.

Prior to being named San Bernardino County Fire Chief, Hartwig served six years with the Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection District, where he was promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief. Prior to that, he served with San Bernardino County Fire, starting as an extra-help firefighter in 1992 and working his way to the rank of captain, serving as the department's Emergency Medical Services supervisor and training officer.

"Santa Barbara County has a long history of catastrophic fires, but an equally long history of outstanding Fire Chiefs who have guided our department and County through these tough times," said Fifth District Supervisor Steve Lavagnino, Chair of the Board. "Our board is confident that Chief Hartwig brings with him the experience, expertise and drive to take on this challenge. We are committed to provide him with the tools that he needs to do his job effectively."

According to County Executive Officer Mona Miyasato, "We were fortunate to be presented with several highly qualified and exemplary candidates for this critical position. Chief Hartwig stood out given his experience, statewide leadership, expertise in emergency medical services, and understanding of disaster readiness. I have every confidence that he will bring strong, steady leadership and a continued commitment to our Fire Department's time-honored tradition of excellence, professionalism and preparedness."

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During his career, Chief Hartwig developed an expertise in emergency medical services and most recently has been working closely with the California Fire Chiefs Association to help solidify county and local government's role in the delivery of emergency medical services. He served as president of the California Fire Chiefs Association for 2017-18 and is an advisory board member for the Loma Linda University Emergency Medical Care Program and the Victor Valley Community College Paramedic Academy. In December 2012, Chief Hartwig was appointed to the California Commission on Emergency Medical Services.

"I am excited to join the Santa Barbara County team and the well-respected County Fire Department, and look forward to further engaging our communities and our partners in the ongoing review and development of disaster readiness and response," stated Mark Hartwig. "Engagement and partnerships are the keys to success."

Miyasato added, "I would like to recognize former Santa Barbara County Fire Chief Mike Dyer, who has served as Interim Fire Chief since the retirement of Chief Eric Peterson last fall. We appreciate his willingness to fill an important role."

Chief Hartwig has a master's degree in Emergency Services Administration, bachelor's Degrees in Zoology and Emergency Medical Care, and associate degrees in Paramedic Studies and Fire Administration; and numerous certifications in fire studies.

For information about the County of Santa Barbara, go to www.countyofsb.org.