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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

June 14, 2017

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Harris:

I have sent the enclosed letters to Chairman Hatch and Ranking Minority Member Wyden of the Senate Finance Committee, reiterating the County of Santa Barbara's opposition to any changes in Federal law that would reduce or eliminate level of funding provided to Santa Barbara County for health care services under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), including mental health treatment and substance use disorder treatment.

One of the most important ways of supporting the health of Santa Barbara County residents is to ensure their access to health care coverage and health care services. With the implementation of the ACA, 30,000 county residents are now eligible for Medi-Cal (Medicaid) coverage for the first time. All health care plans now include some essential benefits like maternity, mental health, preventive, and pediatric dental care.

Repeal of the ACA would disrupt health care for thousands of individuals in the County, and millions of Californians, and it would send shockwaves across the state's economy. If its underpinnings are ultimately repealed, it is imperative that Congress adopt a concurrent, comprehensive, and sustainable replacement bill that ensures continued access to health care coverage, insurance market and delivery-system stability, and maintenance of the Medicaid expansion provisions implemented by ACA.

Please work with your colleagues in the Senate to oppose efforts to repeal and/or amend the Affordable Care Act in ways that would reduce or eliminate funding to the County, including for mental health treatment and substance use disorder treatment.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas P. Walters
Washington Representative

TPW:awg