

**BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS**

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**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

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Floor Alert

August 20, 2018

To: Members of the California State Senate

From: The County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors

Subject: AB 626 (Garcia) - OPPOSE

On behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, I respectfully urge your opposition of AB 626 (Garcia), which would establish “microenterprise home kitchens (MHKs)” as a new category of retail food facility. AB 626 would expand California’s cottage food laws that currently allow the sale of non-potentially hazardous foods, such as baked goods, jams and vinegars, to include potentially hazardous foods, such as meats, poultry and fish.

In line with the CSAC’s letter dated January 22nd, local public health and environmental health departments work diligently to prevent and reduce community exposure to foodborne illnesses. The County has concerns about the preparation of potentially hazardous foods in private homes for public consumption, as the average home kitchen is not built to the same code as commercial kitchens. For example, commercial kitchens have separate sinks for washing produce, handling meats, and cleaning activities to limit cross-contamination; home kitchens typically have one sink. Private homes would also prove challenging to regulate as it would be difficult to restrict kitchen access from other influences during the preparation of food for sale. Children, pets, and other guests would likely have access to the home kitchen and items used for personal food preparation, such as oils and seasonings, would often intermingle or be the same as those used for sales without proper sanitation. Because of this, meals sold out of home kitchens have an increased risk of causing outbreaks of foodborne illness.

Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year 48 million people get sick from a foodborne illness. Of that total, roughly 128,000 are hospitalized and roughly 3,000 die. Also, according to the CDC, foodborne illnesses

can be life-threatening, particularly to vulnerable populations such as the elderly, pregnant women, children, and those with weakened immune systems.

The Board of Supervisor's adopted the 2018 Legislative Platform that specifically states that the County supports measures which establish standards that prevent disease and promote wellness to maintain a safe and healthy environment in our community. AB 626 (Garcia) increases the risk of sickness in our communities, and for these reasons the County opposes AB 626 (Garcia).

If you have questions about the Board's position, please contact the County's Legislative Coordinator, Dennis Bozanich at 805-568-3403 or dbozanich@countyofsb.org.

We respectfully urge your 'No' vote on AB 626 (Garcia).