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Second District, Chair

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Third District,

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Fourth District, Vice Chair

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Fifth District

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

July 20, 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. 7608, the upcoming four-bill appropriations package that includes important priorities for the *FY 2021 Agriculture Appropriations* bill and the *FY 2021 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill. The County appreciates your support for the following priorities when it is brought up for consideration next week.

- Full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program. PILT provides support to nearly 1,900 counties across 49 states to offset lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal lands within their jurisdictions. These dollars go toward supporting many services that counties are required to provide on federal public lands such as the costs of search and rescue, law enforcement, and road maintenance. The Trump Administration has proposed to reduce this program from $500 million to $442 million in FY 2021. Thank you for your strong support for PILT in the annual appropriations process to ensure this support continues.

- Funding restrictions to prohibit new oil and gas lease sales on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf in FY 2021. The 1,100-mile coastline of California is a national treasure that is the heart of both tourist and fishing industries and contains priceless natural resources. In Santa Barbara County, both the 1969 oil spill and the 2015 oil pipeline rupture off the Gaviota Coast demonstrated the catastrophic damage that oil extraction can inflict. The County also appreciates your sponsorship of H.R. 279, the *California Clean Coast Act*.

- Funding for the National Endowment for the Arts. Arts and culture are a proven force in developing sustainable economic and community vitality. Recent studies of arts-grant funding initiatives at the national and state level demonstrate the dynamic impact arts and

culture have on the economy and on civic engagement. Grant funds from the NEA are used to attract private sector support and to leverage public sector funds. The benefits include improved quality of life and lifelong learning, public places and parks activated through the arts, and the preservation of cultural assets and practices and increased cross-cultural understanding. Art has also proven to be invaluable as a tool in stimulating and creating economic development and neighborhood revitalization. In Santa Barbara County, the not-for-profit arts sector generates almost 6000 full-time-equivalent jobs for residents.

- Funding for EPA's State and Local Air Quality programs to support basic air pollution control activities, including monitoring air quality, developing and planning control options, permitting and inspecting sources, and enforcing laws and regulations.

- Full mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund as envisioned by the Great American Outdoors Act. This program supports the County's priorities of enhancing recreation and preserving and enhancing the environment.

- Full funding for USDA pest exclusion and pest detection programs. California's agricultural losses to exotic pests exceed $3 billion annually. This funding will allow full implementation of the Section 10007 program, which was reauthorized in the 2018 Farm Bill. This program provides funding to State and local agencies to prevent the introduction or spread of plant pests and diseases.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

DWG: awg