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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

June 30, 2021

The Honorable Salud Carbajal
 U.S. House of Representatives
 2331 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Carbajal:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of the draft *FY 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill that the Appropriations Committee will consider this week.

We recently sent the attached letters to the Committee to request support for the following priorities reflected in the bill:

- Full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program. These payments offset lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal lands and ensure support for many critical services. 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.
- Funding for EPA's State and Local Air Quality programs. This funding - especially the Section 103 & 105 programs - supports basic air pollution control activities, including monitoring air quality, developing and planning control options, permitting and inspecting sources, enforcing laws and regulations, and educating the public.
- Funding for cleanup/removal of historic, abandoned oil and gas wells. Oil and gas development has occurred in Santa Barbara County since as early as the 1890's and a significant amount of onshore and offshore oil & gas production continues within the County today. Existing infrastructure continues to age and degrade, some of which requires replacement. A significant amount of historic, abandoned infrastructure associated with discontinued operations is also located within the County.

- 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.
- Funding for the National Endowment for the Arts. Arts and culture are a proven force in developing sustainable economic and community vitality. 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.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gilcrest". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Don Gilcrest
Washington Representative

DWG: awg