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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



SOLANO COUNTY

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June 7, 2022

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: COUNTY-SUPPORTED Provisions in Potential Senate Reconciliation Legislation

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to reiterate key priorities that we believe should be included in any reconciliation bill that might be considered by the Senate. Specifically, the County urges you to support the critical investments outlined below.

Child Care

While the State's increases in childcare funding and programs is having a positive impact on childcare in Solano County, many barriers still exist for families needing quality, affordable, accessible childcare. Earlier this year, a comprehensive needs assessment was conducted in Solano County. It found that the cost of childcare remains one of the greatest barriers for families. As of last fall, Solano County had the capacity to serve 10,115 children ages 0-13 years in 388 licensed childcare homes and 121 centers. While the number of active child care licenses has nearly recovered to pre-pandemic levels, some sites are still not accepting new referrals due to COVID-19's continued impact, so the number of available slots has decreased overall, which places upward pressure on child care costs. According to data from the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network, income-eligible families in Solano County with a preschooler and an infant/toddler are estimated to spend nearly 40 percent of their income on childcare without a subsidy, whereas they spend only spend 5-10 percent of their income on care when a subsidy is available.

To help address our communities' needs, Solano County supports additional federal investments. The provisions offered by Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA) would provide long-term support for childcare. Their proposal would increase appropriations over six years for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), including increased subsidies for families, improving facilities and increasing provider salaries. It also would increase funding for preschools serving three to four-year-old children and bolsters the Head Start program.

Housing & Homelessness

Like all California counties, Solano County has an affordable housing crisis. Our 2021 Affordable Housing Needs Report revealed that 80 percent of our extremely low-income residents pay more than 50 percent of their income toward housing and 10,159 low-income renter households do not have access to an affordable home. Renters in the County need to earn \$31.43 per hour - 2.2 times the state minimum wage - to afford the average monthly asking rent of \$1,634.

As you know, we support both your *Affordable Housing Redevelopment Act* (S. 580) and your *Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act* (S. 2357). The affordable housing bill would reauthorize the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and help state and local governments purchase

blighted, vacant, abandoned, foreclosed, or surplus properties and convert them into affordable housing. It would authorize \$1.5 billion in discretionary appropriations to be allocated as a competitive grant program administered by HUD. And, we have been a long-time supporter of your fighting homelessness bill to establish a competitive grant program for eligible recipients (including counties) for planning and implementation of programs to address homelessness.

Adult Protective Services

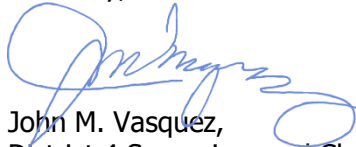
Until the 2020 enactment of the *Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act*, adult protective services (APS) programs authorized by the *Elder Justice Act* had never received a federal appropriation, meaning state and county governments had been solely responsible for funding these essential services. Solano County supports provisions of the House-passed *Build Back Better Act* that would provide \$415 million for each of fiscal years 2023-2025 for state and local APS programs.

Medicaid and Incarcerated Individuals

Solano County has long supported legislation to enable counties to provide inmates with Medicaid support and services 30 days prior to their release. Language enabling this objective was included in the *Build Back Better Act* (H.R. 5376) and would ensure that eligible individuals receive necessary physical and behavioral health services before and after their release from jail, thus helping them to transition back into community living.

We understand that a potential reconciliation measure will need to be targeted for it to pass the Senate. While there are several other provisions of the House-passed reconciliation legislation that Solano County supports, we urge you to work to advance the provisions outlined above and stand ready to support you in those efforts.

Sincerely,



John M. Vasquez,
District 4 Supervisor and Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Senator
Solano County Board of Supervisors
Solano County Legislative Delegation
Jerry Huber, Director, H&SS, Solano County
Karen Lange, Legislative Advocate, SYASL Partners, Inc.