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October 8, 2018

Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street, Room 407
Santa Barbara, CA
93101

RE: County Draft 2019 Legislative Platform

Dear Chair Das Williams and Honorable Supervisors:

Heal the Ocean would like to, if we can, make a few comments on the Legislative Platform you are considering on Tuesday, October 9, 2018.

Wastewater Treatment Systems: Heal the Ocean agrees with the recommendation for financial assistance in the form of grants or low or no-interest loans for property owners abandoning their septic systems and connecting to public sewer. Financial help is crucial for homeowners when the cost is high, and we've seen how much it helps when there is financial help from the state (i.e. the \$2 million fund captured by then-Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson to pay for septic-to-sewer projects). This money is needed for engineering studies, assessment engineering studies for actual projects, and area management plans to place such projects on priority funding lists with the State.

We think it would be helpful to list the areas deemed "problematic" for septic systems, just as the Platform identifies medium and high priority groundwater basins for the SGMA Funding section, i.e., Beach Club Road (lower Toro Canyon), pockets of septic systems within SB City limits (for which feasibility studies have been done: including Braemar/Yankee Farm, Veronica Springs, and other areas identified in the West End Master Plan).

Sustainable Ground Water Management Funding: The draft Legislative Platform recognizes Proposition 1 help for Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and the formation and execution of Groundwater Management Plans. However, **Proposition 68**, which passed in June 2018, allocates \$290 million "for drought and groundwater investments to achieve regional sustainability." Of that amount, \$100 million is available for water recycling projects that will help with groundwater/regional sustainability. We suggest the Legislative Platform be updated to reflect this additional funding.

Please correct the number of medium/high priority basins within the county. Under “Summary of the Issue” four medium/high priority groundwater basins are listed (Cuyama Valley, San Antonio Creek Valley, Santa Ynez River Valley and Santa Maria), but there are actually six within the county. Montecito has been classified as a medium priority basin and Carpinteria has been classified as a high priority basin, so the Legislative Platform should be corrected accordingly.

Ocean Water Testing: Heal the Ocean is a bit concerned about the deletion of Ocean Water Testing from the 2019 Legislative Platform draft. Shouldn’t Santa Barbara continue to legislate for better funding to test ocean quality for ALL coastal communities? As a popular seaside vacation destination in California, do we really want to eliminate our legislative efforts to fund adequate monitoring of our ocean water quality?

Because AB411 mandates beach testing *only* “during a fiscal year in which the legislature has appropriated sufficient funds,” stakeholders, like Santa Barbara County, must continue to legislate for ongoing funding to ensure proper ocean quality monitoring each and every year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Hillary Hauser, Executive Director



Andrew Juiliano, Policy Analyst