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UNION ENGINEERING COMPANY, INC.
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January 28, 2022

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Departmental Agenda #3 – HEARING - Consider recommendations regarding the development of a Countywide Community Workforce Agreement (CWA) Ordinance and Project Template

Dear Supervisors,

As a contractor that has worked on projects in Santa Barbara County both past and present, I strongly urge you to direct staff to pause CWA negotiations so that contractors can review and assess the impacts of the proposed agreement to their businesses. Contractors were not included in the negotiations but are ultimately responsible for delivering the work as set forth in the CWA. Thus, it is reasonable to allow us time to share with you how the proposed agreement points may impact our business and the delivery of projects in the County.

For decades, Santa Barbara County has been developed, expanded, and maintained thanks to the work of both union and non-union companies. These companies comply with all labor and construction rules and continue to locally support the economic stimulation of the county.

Government mandated labor agreements (PLAs, PSAs, and CWAs), whether they be project specific, municipality specific, or local workforce specific, should be negotiated with contractor input as the contractor that builds the work is ultimately the only entity held responsible to deliver the project under the terms and conditions of any agreement. Lack of contractor input on such agreements can erode the benefits of the competitive bidding process, and cause resources to be spent on additional administrative requirements rather than actual construction of the project itself. Agencies and their projects directly benefit from the expertise provided by contractors who manage the day-to-day construction process.

To reiterate, we strongly urge you to pause negotiations and give contractors the opportunity to provide input on the proposed agreement points. We remain committed to delivering timely projects that stay within budget and adhere to the highest safety standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernest Ford".

Ernest Ford
President
Union Engineering Company, Inc.