

**ATTACHMENT B**

CEQA Notice of Exemption

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Supervisor Gregg Hart, 2nd District Supervisor, and Supervisor Steve Lavagnino, 5<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN: n/a Case No.: n/a

Location: Santa Barbara County, all Districts

Project Title: Urgency Ordinance to Temporarily Prohibit Commercial Evictions

Project Applicant: n/a

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Barbara County

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara County

Exempt Status: (Check one)

Ministerial

Statutory Exemption

Categorical Exemption

Emergency Project

Not A Project

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) exempts emergency projects that consist of specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) exempts activities that are covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) provides that "Projects" subject to CEQA do not include organization or administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Reasons to support exemption findings:

This Urgency Ordinance would temporarily prohibit and suspend commercial evictions arising from loss of income or substantial medical expenses related to COVID-19, Coronavirus pandemic, until March 31, 2021. This Urgency Ordinance does not relieve a tenant's obligations to pay rent or restrict a landlord's ability to recover rent due in the future.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency in California due to the threat of Coronavirus Disease 19 ("COVID-19"). As numbers of positive cases increased in other California counties, Santa Barbara County Public Health Officer declared a public health emergency in Santa Barbara County due to COVID-19 on March 12, 2020. On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20 directing, with certain exceptions, that all individuals living in California stay at home or at their place of residence. According to directives from federal, state and local health officials, events have been cancelled, schools have been closed, and residents have been advised to avoid public gatherings, and work at home to prevent the spread of this disease. On March 16, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-28-20, which stated that homelessness can exacerbate vulnerability to COVID-19 and that California must take measures to preserve and increase housing security and thereby protect public health. On June 30, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-71-20 which extended the provisions of Order N-28-20 through September 30, 2020. On September 23, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-80-20 which extended the provisions of Order N-28-20 until March 31, 2021. Consistent with Executive Order N-80-20, this Urgency Ordinance for commercial evictions will be effective through March 31, 2021 and will require tenants to pay 25% of rent due between September 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. The Urgency Ordinance is necessary to mitigate the COVID-19 emergency by protecting commercial businesses and the public health.

Furthermore, the Urgency Ordinance will have the effect of preserving the commercial Santa Barbara County tenants who would otherwise be negatively impacted by the COVID-19 emergency. In addition to preventing additional business closures, this measure would lessen economic stress that further compounds residents' health and vulnerability to COVID-19. The Urgency Ordinance will not result in significant effects on or direct or indirect changes in the environment.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Chris Henson      Phone #: 805-568-2191

Date: January 26, 2021

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Filed by County Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_.