



A PRIVATE NONPROFIT

Community Action Commission

OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

February 12, 2018

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

RE: Human Services Commission Funding

Honorable Members of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors:

I am reaching out to you to express support for continued funding under the County Human Services Commission.

The Community Action Commission currently receives funding for our Healthy Senior Lunch program and 2-1-1 Helpline information and referral services. Both programs rely heavily on County Human Services funds to maintain current service levels and, as such, face significant reductions in service levels and/or possible elimination of services.

The **Healthy Senior Lunch Program** provides nutritious, life-sustaining meals to nearly 1,300 low-income and homebound seniors across Santa Barbara County at congregate meal sites or through home delivery. *Without these meals, over 95% of seniors served report they would have to choose between purchasing food or paying for healthcare/prescription drugs and/or housing.* The potential loss of \$30,000 in Human Services funding will result in **7,000 fewer meals** to this vulnerable population, leaving our local seniors at higher risk for placement in assisted living facilities or development of chronic or life-threatening illness.

The Community Action Commission also serves as the host organization for Santa Barbara County's **2-1-1 Helpline** service which provides 24-hour a day information and referrals in 150 languages to over 2,800 low cost and no cost health and human service providers. In addition, our 2-1-1 Helpline assists the County during emergencies and, during the recent Thomas Fire/Winter Storm incidents, *answered over 4,435 calls from residents in need of emergency assistance or local emergency response information.* In fact, 2-1-1 Helpline handled nearly three-quarters of its annual call volume in a 6-week period during these incidents, *resulting in a \$34,147 shortfall in funding for the current fiscal year.* The potential loss of \$30,000 in funding for 2-1-1 in the upcoming fiscal year would be devastating on top of current shortfalls and ultimately result in difficult decisions regarding future operation of 2-1-1 services.

The Community Action Commission understands that the Board of Supervisors faces extremely difficult budgetary decisions moving forward, but respectfully asks that cuts to Human Services funding be excluded from consideration for the upcoming fiscal year.

Respectfully,

Patricia D. Keelean, M.Ed., CCAP
Executive Director

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