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October 19, 2021

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

RE: Investing ARPA Funds into Child Care

Dear Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors:

This letter is in **support of the ARPA Child Care funding** proposal submitted to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors by the Emergency Child Care Initiative (ECCI), item 4 on the October 5 meeting agenda.

Our economic recovery is intrinsically connected to the availability of quality and affordable childcare. Without this resource, working parents are constrained in the economic opportunities available to them to support their families, and a lack of affordable childcare perpetuates the barriers to economic empowerment for women and minorities. Additionally, without adequate childcare for working parents, local businesses are not able to source the workers they need to themselves recover from the financial impact of the pandemic. This investment will help ensure the problem doesn't get worse, while also increasing the engagement of individual child care providers with support systems which can improve the quality of their operations and prepare them for potential expansion.

The Santa Maria Valley YMCA has lost multiple employees due to their childcare concerns during this pandemic. We need to support all safe, affordable and quality childcare for the recovery of our communities.

Child care is a pillar of our local infrastructure, and the economy is negatively impacted when child care is not available. I encourage the County and cities of Santa Barbara County to invest American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds in critically needed relief and recovery funds for the child care sector.

Sincerely,

Shannon K. Seifert

Shannon K. Seifert, CEO
Santa Maria Valley YMCA