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**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

September 24, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1108 (Hart) – Forensic Accountability, Custodial Transparency, and Safety (FACTS) Act of 2025**  
***Request for Signature***

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your signature on AB 1108, Assembly Member Gregg Hart's measure that establishes a new set of procedures for autopsies following an in-custody death in jurisdictions with combined sheriff-coroner functions.

AB 1108, which enacts the Forensic Accountability, Custodial Transparency, and Safety (FACTS) Act of 2025, is long overdue. The measure is intended to safeguard the independence and impartiality of death investigations arising from in-custody fatalities in jurisdictions where sheriff and coroner responsibilities are consolidated within a single office. In these circumstances, a county with a joint sheriff-coroner – beginning January 1, 2027 – must either contract with (1) a county (or more than one county) that operates an independent coroner or medical examiner or (2) a third-party provider that meets the qualifications set forth in the bill.

This measure is necessary to eliminate real and perceived conflicts of interest that could arise when the same office that may have been involved with an in-custody fatality is also responsible for the subsequent death investigation. Requiring an independent autopsy process in these cases promotes impartiality, strengthens transparency and accountability, and aligns with nationally recognized best practices. Importantly, AB 1108 promotes public trust in the integrity of death

investigations, which is especially necessary in highly sensitive cases that involve law enforcement.

For these reasons, the County respectfully requests your signature on this measure. Thank you for considering the County's perspective.

Respectfully,

Jean Kinney Hurst  
Legislative Advocate

cc: Honorable Members, County of Santa Barbara Delegation