

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

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From: Ana Citrin <ana.citrin@gaviotacoastconservancy.org>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2024 11:10 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Letter for BOS, Agenda Item No. 7 (AEO)
Attachments: GCC to BOS_AEO_11-1-24_FINAL.pdf

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Dear Clerk, please accept the attached letter to the Board supporting Staff's recommendation to approve the AEO. Best regards, Ana

--
Ana Citrin
Legal and Policy Director



(805) 570-4190

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November 1, 2024

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

. RE: Departmental Item No. 7, Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance (AEO)

Dear Chair Lavagnino and Honorable Supervisors,

The Gaviota Coast Conservancy (GCC) is committed to permanently protecting the rural character and environmental integrity of the Gaviota Coast for present and future generations. We appreciate the time and effort that has gone into this ordinance, including by County staff and Planning Commissioners, as well as interested stakeholders, other agencies, and the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC). GCC supports the AEO's important goal of helping to sustain the economic viability and diversity of agricultural operations in unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County including the Gaviota Coast.

A key part of GCC's mission is to encourage regenerative agricultural practices that build soil, manage water wisely, reduce toxic chemical use and support biological resources. To advance its mission in this area, GCC awards grants to projects that help expand the acreage and number of farmers and ranchers using regenerative agricultural practices in the Gaviota Coast area, and funds the Gaviota Agricultural Project (GAP) to advise this grantmaking effort, which includes conservation partners at the Community Environmental Council (CEC), Cachuma Resource Conservation District (CRCD), and The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (LTSBC). A key objective of GAP's work is to identify and address regulatory barriers that stand in the way of more widespread adoption of regenerative agricultural practices. To that end, we proposed and supported changes to the AEO Project Description during the scoping process and in comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) that encourage regenerative agricultural practices on the County's Ag-II zoned lands, specifically by reducing regulatory barriers to composting and pollinator hedgerow use. We are pleased that the proposed AEO before your Board includes many of the revisions we proposed and supported to make small scale composting more accessible to County farmers and ranchers.

As with all ambitious ordinance amendment projects, there are bound to be stakeholders that would prefer that certain changes be made. However, this lengthy and thorough process crafted an ordinance that strikes an appropriate balance between allowing additional uses on Ag-II lands, while safeguarding agricultural viability and protecting the environment. Any requested revisions to the AEO that would stall its adoption should be considered at a later time *after* the ordinance has a chance to take effect and be implemented in the real world. We respectfully request that the Board **approve the proposed AEO at its November 5th hearing**, consistent with the Recommended Actions identified in the Board Letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ana Citrin', written over a horizontal line.

Ana Citrin
GCC Legal and Policy Director