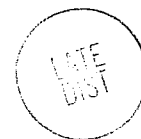


6

WOMENS' ENVIRONMENTAL WATCH**W. E. Watch****Post Office Box 830****Solvang, California 93463**

April 3, 2009



Joseph Centeno, Chairman
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: SB 170 - Williamson Act Contracts: Cancellation

Dear Chairman Centeno and Board Members:

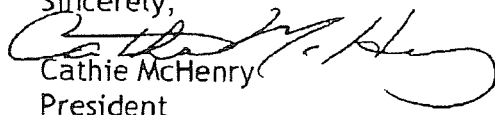
The Women's Environmental Watch is a Santa Ynez Valley community organization established in 1992 with membership in excess of 200. We are writing to urge you to issue a letter in opposition to SB 170. Many community organizations as well as the Regional Council of Rural Counties, California State Association of Counties, and the California Farm Bureau have all written stating their opposition to SB 170.

SB 170 would provide Native American tribes or tribal groups with the ability to seek immediate cancellation of a Williamson Act contract by claiming a variety of new uses on that land as in the public interest. It would force the Board of Supervisors of an affected county to rebut the public interest presumption in order to disallow the immediate contract cancellation. Many of our financially strapped counties would be forced into the position of assuming the burden of an almost certain expensive lawsuit with tribal interests should they wish to oppose the contract cancellation.

Santa Barbara County has a long history of vigorous support of the Williamson Act. The platform includes language referencing the preservation and/or acquisition of open space in the county. The Williamson Act plays an integral role in maintaining the character of our communities.

We oppose SB 170 in the strongest possible terms and request you issue a letter stating your opposition to SB 170.

Sincerely,


Cathie McHenry
President