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January 14, 2011

VIA EMAIL

Supervisor Salud Carbajal (supervisorcarbajal@sbcbos1.org)
Chairwoman Joni Gray (jgray@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
Members of the Board of Supervisors (sbcob@santa-barbara.ca.us)
Santa Barbara County
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101

Re: Land Use Development Code and Coastal Commission – Board’s January 18, 2011 Hearing

Dear Supervisor Carbajal, Madame Chairwoman and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

We are pleased that the Board of Supervisors has, to date, rejected the Coastal Commission’s misguided efforts to usurp power over local land use decisions by imposing modifications to Santa Barbara County’s application to amend the Land Use Development Code. We believe that the members of the Board of Supervisors carefully balanced the many factors surrounding this important issue, and determined correctly that these land use issues should be decided by locally-elected and accountable government, not by a state body far removed from the importance of local concerns.

The Coastal Commission’s dismissal of the County’s land use authority ignores the County’s long history of effectively and wisely managing its coastal resources and coastal planning over the past 40 years. Santa Barbara County has consistently and effectively protected, preserved and enhanced the unique nature of its coastal resources, and risks ceding control of those efforts if the Coastal Commission’s Suggested Modifications are adopted. Furthermore, the Coastal Commission also disregards its own historical precedent and position, as nothing in the Coastal Act has changed that would justify the Coastal Commission’s interpretation of the Coastal Act in the manner suggested by the Coastal Commission’s Suggested Modifications. We believe that the Board of Supervisors should continue to categorically reject the Coastal Commission’s Suggested Modifications, and should oppose the Coastal Commission’s power grab by withdrawing its Land Use Development Code amendment application and opting instead to continue to manage its coastal land use affairs under the current Local Coastal Plan. This is the only way that the County can continue to preserve local control over land use decisions that should not be subject to an unaccountable political commission’s authority.

In addition to these general concerns over the Coastal Commission’s wrongful effort to seize control over coastal land use decisions, we continue to have serious concerns with many specific elements of the Suggested Modifications, particularly as they relate to the permitted uses of coastal properties, construction of accessory structures, and restrictions on beach access and

stairway structures. We believe that the poorly conceived restrictions and policies contained in the Suggested Modifications are emblematic of the type of narrow, short-sighted decision-making that we should expect if the Coastal Commission's efforts are not stopped.

We thank you for the courage and leadership that you and the Board of Supervisors have displayed to date in educating the public about the disastrous effects that the Coastal Commission's proposed changes to the County's Local Coastal Plan would have. We strongly urge you to continue to oppose the Coastal Commission's efforts. We believe the only way to prevent the Coastal Commission from obtaining this control is now to abandon its Land Use Development amendment application effort and to continue to rely upon the existing Land Use Development Code, which has served and can continue to serve the County and its citizens well.

Sincerely,



Susan W. Robertson



Carl W. Robertson