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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

May 6, 2025

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **SB 635 (Durazo): Food vendors and facilities: enforcement activities**
As amended 5/01/25 – CONCERNS
Awaiting hearing – Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Senator Durazo:

On behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, I write to share our concerns regarding your Senate Bill 635. While we recognize the need to protect vendors from certain law enforcement actions, the County also feels strongly about enacting a robust regulatory program that reduces the risks to public safety and health that have resulted from an unregulated food vendor environment. As a result, we are concerned about our ability to work toward a robust local licensing and enforcement program, while safeguarding sensitive information about vendors' immigration status, under the provisions of SB 635.

In March of this year, the Board formed a regional task force "with the goal to collaborate, strategize, and share resources and best practices to address unlawful roadside and sidewalk vending." These efforts stem from regulatory challenges about time, place, and manner of food vending, as well as concerns about compliance with food safety regulations and illegal dumping laws. These efforts are focused on ensuring that food vendors are providing safe and healthy provisions to customers, as well as complying with location and time of operation requirements. In order to operate an effective licensing program, the County will need to collect information to appropriately license and regulate these vendors. It is important to stress that we are not interested in collecting information related to a vendor's immigration or citizenship status and are not interested in sharing such information with the federal government. However, we may be interested in understanding a vendor's criminal history, especially with vendors seeking to locate near sensitive areas, like schools or parks.

Further, SB 635 prohibits a local agency from utilizing a contracted entity to assist in compliance with a local vending ordinance. While we recognize that most local agencies do not utilize contractors to provide enforcement services for food vendors, we also understand that enforcement can be a costly and challenging effort, and contracting that activity to a vendor may be the most effective use of taxpayer

resources. Again, we are not interested in contracting with entities that may share sensitive information with the federal government; we are only interested in ensuring an effective licensing program.

We understand and commend the intent behind SB 635, but would appreciate your consideration of language that ensure that the County can establish a licensing program for sidewalk and roadside food vending that protects the public's health and safety at a reasonable cost and ensures the economic well-being of all food vendors in our community. We believe that amendments that continue to allow us to do so will benefit all Californians.

We appreciate your consideration of our request. Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jean Kinney Hurst", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Members and Consultants, Senate Appropriations Committee