

From: Robert Niehaus <Drbob@rdniehaus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 8:03 AM
To: Caldwell, Andy; sbcob
Cc: Steve Lavagnino; Bob Nelson; Joan Hartmann; Das Williams; Laura Capps; Mona Miyasato
Subject: Public Comment A 37 including CEQA and Brown Act concerns

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To: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

I urge the Board to refrain from taking any actions to raise minimum wages for any business in the county, and especially for our agricultural enterprises.

Interventions by any level of government that raise wages above the rates that are sustainable by labor markets inevitably distort the functioning of those markets. The sordid history of minimum wage laws in the United States offers abundant evidence that they invariably destroy jobs and wipe out the earnings of workers who otherwise would be employed in those jobs. Moreover, the jobs lost almost always are those held by Hispanic, black, or other minority workers with the least education and fewest labor market skills. Minimum wage laws are racist and cruel in addition to causing harm to the families and businesses that rely on the products of the industries regulated.

Wrong-headed government policies, in place for decades, that have resulted in insufficient housing for the people of Santa Barbara County must not serve as the justification for more

wrong-headed actions on your part. It is immoral for your Board to run roughshod over the billions of individual decisions by free people that determine wages for our farm workers.

To paraphrase Hippocrates, “do no harm or injustice” to those who have entrusted you with great responsibility.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Niehaus
Santa Barbara