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May 11, 2012

Dear Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors,

Following our CLUE Board meeting last evening, **CLUE** would like to further express in detail our support for the proposed merger of Bringing Our Community Home (The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness), the Homeless Advisory Committees, and Common Ground Santa Barbara. CLUE has participated in BOCH from its beginning, and we believe that this collaborative model is important for the long journey to the successful elimination of chronic homelessness by providing supportive housing. We participated in Common Ground, both in training our members and forming faith community teams to do actual interviews to identify the most vulnerable. We have seen the success of housing the most vulnerable in the Common Ground Report Card.

Now this merger of these countywide homeless advisory bodies promises to significantly streamline and improve the coordination of homeless services in Santa Barbara County. We urge a similar Yearly Report Card on its achievements.

Our hope is that this new model will ultimately benefit not only those in our communities struggling with homelessness, but all in our community as we work in a coordinated and collective fashion to better set concrete goals, analyze the needs, and efficiently maximize resources to move forward in solving the crisis of homelessness in our County. The leadership of both advisory bodies have held meetings with us to get input on the proposed new structure. We can see the possibility of a more effective decision making process with the heads of departments present in the Coordination Committee. As the 2010-11 Grand Jury Report on Homeless Mentally Ill Indigent recidivism illustrates, there is an identified need for centralized coordination among public and non-profit resources in order to more effectively combat the poverty, mental and physical illness, and addiction issues at the root of chronic homelessness. Clue continues to seek a just and compassionate distribution of economic resources ensuring lives of dignity for all. We will be involved in this new collaborative effort by participating in the Community Action Group. We will work to continue our advocacy and set goals to further achieve availability of supportive housing for all. We urge you to take the necessary steps to make administrative changes needed, as well as to provide funding, to establish the centralized infrastructure and dedicated staffing for this effort.

Sincerely,
Maureen Earls, on behalf of CLUE Board of Directors