

Katherine Douglas

General Public comment - GMP 1

From: Robert Lesser <bobbyless@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2026 6:45 PM
To: Carmela Beck
Cc: Roy Lee; Villalobos, David; Brittany Odermann; sbcob; Bob Nelson; Joan Hartmann; Concerned Carpenterians; Carrillo Anna; Stassinis Jill; Peebles Merrily; Foley Maureen; Wade Cowper; Wondolowski Mike
Subject: Re: Autumn Brands horrific odor todayS.B. Residents Say No

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

greetings Carmela,
 Today outside the Autumn Brands operation - at 3615 Foothill Carpinteria -was possibly the worst odor in Carpinteria in 7 years.
 Of course, it is bad every day...but today you had to hold your nose simply to drive by.

Can you give us a schedule of what steps will be taken by the County to remove the license of this long term violator ?
 The voters of the First District removed a Supervisor because of this issue. What are the concrete steps you plan to take?

Sincerely,
 Robert Lesser
 Concerned Carpenterians

On Jun 11, 2026, at 5:29 PM, Carmela Beck <cbeck@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Received. Thank you, I will forward accordingly.

Best,



Carmela Beck (she/her/ella)

Program Manager – Cannabis
 County Executive Office
 105 E. Anapamu St., Rm 108
 Santa Barbara, CA 93101
 C 805-705-3237
 W www.countyofsb.org

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From: Robert Lesser <bobbyless@aol.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 10:25 PM

To: Carmela Beck <cbeck@countyofsb.org>

Subject: S.B. Residents Say No to G&K! and K&G Case: # 2026050515, 26TEX-00006 K&G Flowers, 3561 Foothill/3480 Via Real

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Carmela Beck,

Please pass on to the Los Angeles' judge a resounding NO! to G&K Appeal and
K&G Flowers, 3561 Foothill/3480 Via Real Case: # 2026050519, 26TEX-00006

1. These companies & this site have received ***the most odor complaints of any cannabis operation in the Carpinteria Valley.***
2. In August 2021 the owner Graham Farrar, as part of CARP Growers (about 20 local growers) signed an agreement with the Coalition for Responsible Cannabis promising to install carbon scrubbers - that being the most effective way of mitigating overwhelming skunk-like odors.
3. Since by January 2025 (3 ½ years later) only about 1/3 of Carpinteria's 25 growers had installed the carbon scrubbers, deemed the Best Available Control Technology; the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors mandated that every cannabis cultivation site install Multi Technology Carbon Filters by March 31, 2026 so the whole valley would finally be free of the terrible skunky smell that wafts into our local high school, homes of many residents, businesses, parks.
4. G&K and K&G's five former greenhouses now being used for cannabis have ***roof vents that need to be opened, emitting skunk-like odors that pollute our air.*** Until March 2026 an ineffective vapor phase system was being used but because of additional health concerns and the pumping of more chemicals into our local air, that odor system was terminated March 2026 to be replaced with Multi Technology Carbon Filters with measurements at the property line of odors equal or less than 4 D/T.

5. December 2025, G&K and K&G et al asked for a 12 month extensions, though they had already been given a year to install Multi Technology Carbon Filtration units.
6. G&K and K&G has long known about their electrical problem but waited far too long to fapply to the Edison Company for an upgrade. G&K and K&G only submitted their request to So. Cal. Edison on August 25, 2025 and then were notified on January 16, 2026 that no upgrade was available at that time. G&K and K&G were hoping to receive a further extension which was denied by the Board on April 10, 2026 ; G&K and K&G appealed their denial of their annual business license. WE say No! no more extensions for pot growers operating in bad faith.
7. Carpinterian residents have no sympathy for G&K and K&G as they have not been operating in good faith, ***promising to install carbon scrubbers in 2021***, but never doing so! creating a health hazard and nuisance in the vicinity, affecting hundreds of residents.

Sincerely,
Robert Lesser
Carpinteria, Calif. 93013

Katherine Douglas

From: Tasia Nichole <tasiasaumier@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2026 10:46 PM
To: info@hacsb.org; janetmora@hasbarco.org; sbcob
Cc: senator.limon@senate.ca.gov; info@saludcarbajal.com; governor@governor.ca.gov; communications@hcd.ca.gov; contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov; answers@hud.gov; agpressooffice@doj.ca.gov
Subject: Urgent Request for Housing Assistance, Investigation, and Reform — A Disabled Single Mother Trying to Return Home to Santa Barbara County
Attachments: Urgent Request for Housing Assistance^J Investigation^J and Reform.docx

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Subject: Urgent Request for Housing Assistance, Investigation, and Reform — A Disabled Single Mother Trying to Return Home to Santa Barbara County

Dear Santa Barbara County Housing Authorities, Housing Assistance Representatives, Public Officials, and Community Leaders,

My name is **Tasia Saumier**, and I am writing to every housing authority, housing assistance program, public official, and agency I can reach because I desperately need help finding a safe pathway for my daughter and me to return home to Santa Barbara County—and because I believe what has happened to us reveals serious systemic failures in housing law, habitability standards, environmental investigation, code enforcement, mold remediation, tenant protections, and access to justice that urgently require investigation and reform.

I come from Santa Barbara County. This is where I grew up, where my history is, and where I experienced some of the most formative and difficult years of my life. Yet despite years of trying to build a safe and stable life for my daughter and myself, it has become extraordinarily difficult to come home.

I am writing for two interconnected reasons. First, I desperately need help finding a safe pathway for my daughter and me to return home to Santa Barbara County. Second, I am asking local and county officials to formally investigate and reform the laws, building codes, habitability standards, enforcement practices, environmental-testing requirements, mold-remediation standards, evidentiary barriers, and tenant protections that I believe have allowed my family—and potentially countless others—to become trapped in hazardous housing without a realistic means of proving the danger, compelling proper remediation, or asserting our legal rights without risking displacement.

I do not want my experience merely documented as another unfortunate housing story. I want what happened to us examined as evidence of a systemic failure requiring legislative and regulatory change.

I intend to begin locally, by bringing these concerns to housing authorities, city and county officials, boards of supervisors, code-enforcement agencies, public-health authorities, disability advocates, and elected representatives throughout the tri-county region, including Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo Counties. If these issues cannot be adequately addressed locally, I intend to bring them to state and, if necessary, federal officials.

I am asking for more than assistance. I am asking for accountability, investigation, and reform.

I am a disabled single mother raising and homeschooling my daughter while pursuing my education. I have earned multiple associate degrees, made the Dean's List, and have been accepted to CSU Chico, where I will continue my education online so that I can simultaneously care for my daughter and accommodate our disability-related needs.

For approximately **eight years, I have been waiting for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher assistance in Ventura County.** During those eight years, my daughter has grown up while we have been left to navigate an increasingly unaffordable and, at times, hazardous private rental market without the housing assistance for which I applied years ago.

I recently learned that the Ventura County housing voucher system may use a lottery process, and I have formally requested clarification about whether my eight years of waiting have any meaningful value or whether newer applicants can potentially be selected ahead of families who have already waited nearly a decade.

Meanwhile, our actual experiences in the private rental market have been devastating.

At a previous residence, I endured what I believe were profoundly unlawful rental practices, serious hazardous and uninhabitable conditions, and sexual harassment. The harm was so significant that I believed the circumstances could potentially support litigation involving millions of dollars in damages. Yet the reality of being a disabled single mother responsible for my daughter's daily care, education, housing, and survival meant that I did not have the time, physical capacity, legal assistance, financial resources, or housing security necessary to adequately pursue complex litigation.

I eventually moved, hoping to finally find safety and stability.

Instead, at my current apartment, I have experienced **three separate leaks and resulting mold damage.** Once again, I have been forced to personally document the conditions, contain environmental contamination, protect my daughter, communicate repeatedly with management, and attempt to prevent further exposure—all while attending college, homeschooling and raising my daughter, managing disabilities, and maintaining our daily lives.

Importantly, **our investigation of the building did not begin because I simply saw mold and decided it must be making us sick. Our sickness prompted the investigation.**

My daughter and I began experiencing severe and unusual symptoms, including significant pain and illness, and I began recognizing an association between our symptoms and the recurrent leaks, water-damaged areas, and conditions within the building. Our symptoms would increase in connection with exposure to the affected environment.

I sought medical and dental diagnostic evaluation to investigate other possible causes, including infections and other conditions that could explain the symptoms. Those evaluations did not identify an infection or similar medical or dental cause that explained what we were experiencing. Meanwhile, the relationship between our symptoms and the building environment became increasingly difficult to ignore.

The most compelling part of this experience was what happened when I implemented environmental mitigation and containment. I isolated the affected portions of the apartment, created containment barriers, used extensive air filtration and dehumidification, and took substantial measures to prevent contaminated air and materials from affecting our living spaces.

Our symptoms ceased with effective containment and mitigation and returned or worsened in association with exposure to the affected areas and environmental conditions.

This pattern—symptoms associated with exposure, worsening around the leaks and affected areas, the absence of an identified infectious or similar medical or dental explanation, and cessation of symptoms following effective environmental containment and mitigation—was consistent with the sick-building-related environmental illness I had experienced.

Yet even after experiencing this and conducting an extensive investigation, I discovered an extraordinary catch-22 in the legal, housing, environmental-testing, and remediation systems.

Because I was sick and needed to understand what was happening in our home, **I obtained environmental testing through a third-party laboratory.** I personally collected samples, carefully documented the process, and even video-recorded how I performed the testing. The independent laboratory confirmed positive results.

Yet when I sought legal assistance, I was told that even these third-party laboratory results could be attacked because I had personally participated in collecting the samples. The landlord's defense could simply be to allege that I tampered with the evidence.

I believe such an allegation would be extremely difficult to sustain in light of my videos, documentation, repeated leaks, positive laboratory findings, and the complete context of the evidence. Nevertheless, I was told that the mere possibility of such a defense made the case insufficiently certain for an attorney to accept on a pro bono basis.

Think about the impossible position this creates for a tenant.

I was sick. My daughter was sick. We had experienced repeated leaks. Our symptoms correlated with exposure to the affected environment and ceased following effective containment and mitigation. I documented the conditions. I video-recorded my testing procedure. I submitted samples to an independent third-party laboratory. The laboratory confirmed positive results.

And yet I was still told that this evidence could be challenged simply because I was the person forced to collect it.

So I attempted to obtain fully independent professional testing. That testing would cost approximately **\$500**, already a significant financial burden for a disabled single mother. But then I encountered another barrier: the professional third party needed the landlord's approval and access to conduct the investigation.

The landlord would not provide the necessary consent or access.

This creates an extraordinary and fundamentally unjust catch-22: **the landlord does not want to pay for comprehensive independent testing and remediation, but the landlord can also prevent or obstruct the**

tenant from paying out of pocket for the independent professional investigation necessary to prove the extent of the problem.

The very party who may face financial liability, extensive remediation obligations, or litigation if hidden contamination is discovered can effectively control access to the evidence necessary to establish that the contamination exists.

How can that possibly be a fair system?

If I test the environment myself and send the samples to an independent third-party laboratory, I can be accused of tampering.

If I attempt to hire an independent professional to perform the investigation so that nobody can accuse me of tampering, I face hundreds of dollars in costs and may still require the landlord's cooperation or permission for access.

If the landlord refuses that access or cooperation, the independent investigation cannot proceed.

If the independent investigation cannot proceed, I may be unable to create the evidence necessary to compel comprehensive remediation or successfully pursue litigation.

And if I aggressively demand action without having that evidence, I risk conflict with my landlord and potentially losing my housing before I have anywhere safe to go.

That is not merely a bureaucratic inconvenience. It is a system that can trap sick and disabled tenants inside potentially hazardous housing while simultaneously denying them a realistic pathway to prove why they are sick.

I did all of this while I was sick. I investigated the leaks, documented conditions, performed and video-recorded sampling, obtained third-party laboratory analysis, researched environmental contamination, created containment, operated air filtration and dehumidification equipment, communicated with management, sought medical and dental evaluation, cared for and homeschooled my daughter, attended college, and tried to maintain our daily lives while experiencing severe symptoms.

Many people experiencing the level of sickness and suffering we endured might have gone to an emergency room or hospital. Because of my history of sick building syndrome and environmental sensitivities, I generally avoid the emergency room when I can safely manage symptoms at home. I have created a highly controlled home environment with extensive filtration and environmental mitigation that can be safer for my particular disability-related needs than exposure to an uncontrolled institutional environment. I therefore mitigated at home rather than relying on an emergency room to solve an environmentally driven exposure problem.

This is precisely why the law must require meaningful independent third-party investigation, appropriate testing, professional remediation standards, and post-remediation clearance testing after serious water intrusion and suspected environmental contamination.

A tenant should not have to become her own building scientist, environmental investigator, evidence technician, remediator, medical advocate, and lawyer—all while sick—simply to prove that something inside her home may be harming her family.

The severity of what my daughter and I have experienced from water intrusion, mold, contaminated materials, and faulty or incomplete remediation is difficult to put into words. **We experienced severe pain, suffering, and sickness, and the system left me trapped between continuing to suffer in a potentially hazardous environment and risking the loss of our housing if I fought too aggressively to force proper investigation and remediation.**

One of the most serious problems is that faulty or incomplete remediation can allow mold to repeatedly regrow during periods of moisture, humidity, or recurrent leaks. When proper independent testing, investigation, remediation, and clearance testing are not adequately required or enforced, a landlord may address only what is immediately visible, dry out an area, close walls or flooring, or attempt to clean visible growth without adequately investigating what may remain concealed inside walls, beneath flooring, in crevices, or within water-damaged building materials.

Covering up visible mold or treating a surface with bleach without investigating the underlying moisture source and concealed contamination is, to me, like putting makeup on skin cancer. It may temporarily cover what you can see, but it does not establish that the underlying problem is gone.

Tenants should not have to wait until mold becomes visibly extensive or structural materials begin to rot before meaningful intervention occurs. By that point, occupants may already have suffered prolonged exposure or been forced to leave.

Meanwhile, tenants face an impossible imbalance of power. I have been afraid to aggressively assert my rights or send formal demands because I fear losing my home before I can find another safe place for my daughter and me to live.

California's anti-retaliation protections do not eliminate that fear. My understanding is that the strongest statutory presumption against retaliatory eviction may be limited in time under certain circumstances. The practical reality is that a vulnerable tenant may fear that once that protection expires, a landlord could attempt to terminate the tenancy on another asserted basis, leaving the tenant to bear the burden, cost, stress, and uncertainty of fighting it.

A legal right that a disabled tenant cannot safely exercise without risking homelessness is not an adequate protection.

I feel trapped suffering in a system where inadequate legal and enforcement practices can allow what I consider potentially catastrophic negligence when it pertains to human health. A landlord may have enormously greater financial resources, access to attorneys, control over the property, and power over whether a family continues to have a roof over its head. Meanwhile, the tenant may be sick, disabled, raising a child, financially constrained, and terrified that demanding accountability will result in displacement.

And then comes the next impossible question:

Where are we supposed to go?

My attempts to find alternative housing have only reinforced how serious this crisis has become.

At one property we recently considered, we encountered evidence of serious water damage or rot-related construction and remediation, flea exposure, a loose dog that approached us, and smoking near residential

buildings where smoke could enter windows. At another apartment, I encountered warnings regarding **lead and asbestos**.

I find it profoundly disturbing that families can be asked to sign disclosures acknowledging known environmental hazards and then be expected to live there because they have no affordable alternative.

A signature on a disclosure does not make lead safe. It does not make asbestos safe. It does not make mold safe. It does not make a hazardous building healthy for a child or a disabled person.

I believe we urgently need stronger requirements for appropriate independent third-party investigation and testing when there is evidence of significant water intrusion, mold, lead, asbestos, or other serious environmental hazards. People should not be forced to choose between homelessness and signing paperwork acknowledging that the only home available to them may contain substances capable of harming them.

Too many people are trapped in moldy and environmentally catastrophic homes and rentals because the systems intended to protect them are inadequate. When meaningful third-party testing is not readily accessible, when tenants cannot afford expert evidence, when landlords control access to the property, when code enforcement relies too heavily on visible conditions, and when tenants fear retaliation or displacement for demanding action, **the system effectively allows hazardous housing conditions to continue.**

There is another part of this crisis that deserves serious examination.

People suffering from environmentally related exposures may enter the medical system with headaches, respiratory problems, neurological symptoms, pain, fatigue, gastrointestinal symptoms, skin problems, cognitive difficulties, or other forms of illness, yet the possibility of a building-related environmental exposure may never be meaningfully investigated unless the patient herself is educated enough to raise it.

That creates another devastating catch-22:

A person may become sick because of the building in which they live, but the medical system may treat the symptoms without investigating the building, while the housing system may demand medical or scientific evidence before forcing meaningful action on the building.

The tenant is caught in the middle.

The housing system can say: **Prove the building made you sick.**

The medical system may never ask: **What is happening in the building where you live?**

The landlord can say: **Prove there is hidden contamination.**

And the tenant may be unable to afford the hundreds or thousands of dollars necessary for independent professional investigation, sampling, expert analysis, legal representation, and litigation.

That is not a functioning system of protection. It is a system in which the person with the least money, least power, poorest health, and greatest caregiving burden is expected to carry the greatest burden of proof.

I am not making these statements theoretically. My daughter and I have lived this. We have experienced the pain, sickness, fear, physical labor, financial burden, and psychological strain of trying to remain safe in

housing affected by repeated leaks and mold damage while knowing that aggressively demanding accountability could potentially put our housing security at risk.

And this is precisely why finding somewhere safe to move is so difficult. I cannot simply walk into another apartment and assume that because the walls have been freshly painted, the building is healthy.

Paint can hide a stain. Bleach can temporarily alter what is visible. A wall can be closed while moisture or damaged material remains behind it. A disclosure can acknowledge lead or asbestos without making either disappear.

I need a home where my daughter and I can live safely—not another building where I have to become the investigator, remediator, scientist, advocate, and lawyer simply to protect us.

Formal Request for Investigation and Reform

My experience has convinced me that the current system contains fundamental gaps that can leave tenants trapped in potentially hazardous homes while placing the burden of investigation, evidence collection, scientific proof, medical documentation, legal action, and financial expense almost entirely upon the people who are already sick and least equipped to bear it.

I am therefore formally asking local governments, housing authorities, public-health agencies, code-enforcement departments, elected officials, and legislative bodies to investigate and consider reforms including:

1. **Mandatory independent third-party investigation following significant or recurrent water intrusion**, particularly when occupants report illness or when previous leaks, mold, or incomplete remediation are documented.
2. **Clear standards for investigating concealed moisture and contamination**, including appropriate examination of wall cavities, flooring systems, baseboards, crevices, and other hidden areas where water damage and microbial growth may persist.
3. **Professional remediation standards that go beyond cleaning or treating visible surfaces**. Bleaching, painting over, drying only what is visibly wet, or closing a wall without adequately investigating concealed damage should not be accepted as proof that a property has been safely remediated.
4. **Independent post-remediation clearance testing** when significant contamination or recurrent water intrusion has occurred, so that the same party financially responsible for remediation is not effectively allowed to determine whether its own work was sufficient.
5. **A legally recognized pathway for tenant-obtained laboratory evidence**. Tenants who document their sampling procedures and submit samples to accredited independent laboratories should not find their evidence rendered practically useless merely because they could not afford hundreds or thousands of dollars for an expert to collect the sample.
6. **Protection against landlords obstructing independent investigation**. A landlord should not be able to refuse meaningful access or consent for qualified third-party testing while simultaneously arguing that the tenant lacks adequate independent evidence.
7. **Stronger and longer-lasting anti-retaliation protections**. A tenant should not have to choose between demanding safe housing and fearing eviction once a statutory protection period expires.
8. **Meaningful disability accommodations in housing enforcement and legal processes**, particularly for people whose disabilities limit their ability to repeatedly relocate, litigate, personally investigate environmental hazards, or endure exposure to conventional shelters and temporary housing.

9. **Stronger protections concerning lead, asbestos, mold, smoke infiltration, and other environmental hazards.** Disclosure alone should not become a substitute for safety. A signed form does not neutralize a hazardous substance.
10. **Greater coordination between housing enforcement and healthcare.** The medical system may treat symptoms without investigating environmental exposure, while the housing system may demand medical proof before acting on the building. Families become trapped between two systems, each demanding evidence from the other.
11. **A mechanism for emergency independent testing when occupants report severe symptoms that correlate with a building or affected area and improve following removal, containment, or mitigation.**
12. **Public transparency regarding complaints, recurrent leaks, prior water damage, mold remediation, environmental testing, and code-enforcement history,** so prospective tenants are not unknowingly renting homes with significant histories of unresolved environmental problems.

These reforms should be considered not only in Santa Barbara County, but throughout **Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties**, and wherever existing California law or regulation creates the underlying limitations. Where reform requires state legislation or regulatory action rather than local action, I ask that local officials formally identify those barriers and refer these concerns to the appropriate state agencies and elected representatives.

My Request to Come Home

Throughout all of this, I have continued trying to build a better future.

I returned to college and have worked extraordinarily hard on my education. I have earned multiple associate degrees, made the Dean's List, and been accepted to CSU Chico, where I will continue my education online. I am doing everything within my power to create long-term stability for myself and my daughter.

But education does not eliminate the immediate reality of needing a safe home.

I want to come home to Santa Barbara County.

My connection to Santa Barbara County is deeply personal. As a teenager, I experienced homelessness there as an **unaccompanied minor**, without a parent or guardian providing me with stable housing. I have documentation supporting that history. Despite the extraordinary challenges of those years, Santa Barbara County remains the place I come from and the place I have long wanted to return to.

There is something particularly painful about being unable to return to the place you consider home because housing has become financially inaccessible.

I am therefore asking every housing authority and housing assistance organization receiving this letter:

Please help me understand whether there is any pathway home for my daughter and me.

I am asking to be considered for any program for which we may qualify, including **Housing Choice Vouchers, Section 8 waiting lists, project-based voucher programs, affordable housing communities, disability-related housing programs, family housing, homelessness-prevention programs, CalWORKs-related housing**

assistance, special-needs housing, reasonable accommodations, local preferences, emergency or hardship programs, and any other available pathway to stable housing in Santa Barbara County.

If your agency cannot directly assist us, I respectfully ask that you please **forward this letter to the appropriate program, housing authority, caseworker, coordinated-entry program, nonprofit organization, public official, or other agency that may be able to help or address the systemic issues raised here**, rather than simply responding that your particular waiting list is closed.

I am specifically asking:

- Are there any currently open housing waiting lists for which my daughter and I may apply?
- May I apply for Santa Barbara County housing assistance while remaining on a Ventura County waiting list?
- Does my history as an unaccompanied homeless minor in Santa Barbara County provide eligibility for any program or preference?
- Are there preferences or special programs for disabled parents, families with disabled children, CalWORKs participants, or families living in hazardous housing conditions?
- Can I request a reasonable accommodation or individualized review because of disability-related housing needs?
- Are there project-based voucher properties or affordable housing developments with separate waiting lists to which I should apply individually?
- Are there programs specifically designed to help former Santa Barbara County residents return to the community?
- Is there any agency or individual who can help me navigate multiple programs rather than leaving me to independently contact every housing provider while managing disability, parenting, homeschooling, college, and an ongoing housing crisis?

I am not asking for luxury. I am asking for a safe home where my daughter and I can live without repeatedly confronting mold, water intrusion, smoke, environmental hazards, instability, or the fear that asserting our rights could cost us our housing.

But I am also asking for more than individual assistance.

I do not want another mother to have to become a building scientist, environmental investigator, evidence technician, remediator, medical advocate, and lawyer while she is sick simply to prove that her home may be harming her child.

I do not want another tenant told that personally collected samples analyzed by an independent laboratory can be attacked because the tenant collected them, only to discover that professional testing costs hundreds of dollars and may require cooperation or access controlled by the very landlord who could face liability if contamination is discovered.

I do not want another disabled family trapped between enduring a potentially hazardous environment and aggressively asserting their rights at the risk of losing their home.

What happened to us should not merely generate sympathy. It should generate investigation and reform.

I am therefore formally requesting an individualized review of my family's eligibility for housing assistance and a pathway back to Santa Barbara County; a review of the housing and environmental conditions described in this letter; referral of these concerns to appropriate code-enforcement, public-health, housing, disability-rights, and legislative authorities; and substantive consideration of reforms to the laws, codes, remediation standards, testing requirements, evidentiary barriers, and anti-retaliation protections that have allowed this situation to occur.

I am beginning locally because I believe local government should have the first opportunity to hear directly from the people affected by these systems and to lead meaningful reform. I intend to bring this matter to officials throughout Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo Counties and, where appropriate, to state legislators and California agencies. If necessary, I will also seek review and attention at the federal level.

For approximately eight years, I have waited for housing assistance. During those years, my daughter has grown up. We have endured unsafe conditions, moved seeking safety, encountered further hazards, experienced severe sickness and suffering, and continued waiting. I do not want another eight years of her childhood—or another family's life—to disappear inside a system that desperately needs reform.

Please help us come home. But please also help ensure that what happened to us is not allowed to continue happening to others.

I respectfully request a substantive written response identifying what assistance may be available to my family, which officials or agencies will review the systemic concerns raised here, and what mechanisms exist to formally propose, investigate, and pursue the reforms I have requested.

Thank you for taking the time to read our story. **I am asking you not only to hear it, but to act on it.**

Sincerely,

Tasia Saumier
Ventura County, California

July 9th, 2026

Subject: Urgent Request for Housing Assistance, Investigation, and Reform — A Disabled Single Mother Trying to Return Home to Santa Barbara County

Dear Santa Barbara County Housing Authorities, Housing Assistance Representatives, Public Officials, and Community Leaders,

My name is **Tasia Saumier**, and I am writing to every housing authority, housing assistance program, public official, and agency I can reach because I desperately need help finding a safe pathway for my daughter and me to return home to Santa Barbara County—and because I believe what has happened to us reveals serious systemic failures in housing law, habitability standards, environmental investigation, code enforcement, mold remediation, tenant protections, and access to justice that urgently require investigation and reform.

I come from Santa Barbara County. This is where I grew up, where my history is, and where I experienced some of the most formative and difficult years of my life. Yet despite years of trying to build a safe and stable life for my daughter and myself, it has become extraordinarily difficult to come home.

I am writing for two interconnected reasons. First, I desperately need help finding a safe pathway for my daughter and me to return home to Santa Barbara County. Second, I am asking local and county officials to formally investigate and reform the laws, building codes, habitability standards, enforcement practices, environmental-testing requirements, mold-remediation standards, evidentiary barriers, and tenant protections that I believe have allowed my family—and potentially countless others—to become trapped in hazardous housing without a realistic means of proving the danger, compelling proper remediation, or asserting our legal rights without risking displacement.

I do not want my experience merely documented as another unfortunate housing story. I want what happened to us examined as evidence of a systemic failure requiring legislative and regulatory change.

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I am asking for more than assistance. I am asking for accountability, investigation, and reform.

I am a disabled single mother raising and homeschooling my daughter while pursuing my education. I have earned multiple associate degrees, made the Dean's List, and have been accepted to CSU Chico, where I will continue my education online so that I can simultaneously care for my daughter and accommodate our disability-related needs.

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Meanwhile, our actual experiences in the private rental market have been devastating.

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Importantly, **our investigation of the building did not begin because I simply saw mold and decided it must be making us sick. Our sickness prompted the investigation.**

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experiencing. Meanwhile, the relationship between our symptoms and the building environment became increasingly difficult to ignore.

The most compelling part of this experience was what happened when I implemented environmental mitigation and containment. I isolated the affected portions of the apartment, created containment barriers, used extensive air filtration and dehumidification, and took substantial measures to prevent contaminated air and materials from affecting our living spaces.

Our symptoms ceased with effective containment and mitigation and returned or worsened in association with exposure to the affected areas and environmental conditions.

This pattern—symptoms associated with exposure, worsening around the leaks and affected areas, the absence of an identified infectious or similar medical or dental explanation, and cessation of symptoms following effective environmental containment and mitigation—was consistent with the sick-building-related environmental illness I had experienced.

Yet even after experiencing this and conducting an extensive investigation, I discovered an extraordinary catch-22 in the legal, housing, environmental-testing, and remediation systems.

Because I was sick and needed to understand what was happening in our home, **I obtained environmental testing through a third-party laboratory.** I personally collected samples, carefully documented the process, and even video-recorded how I performed the testing. The independent laboratory confirmed positive results.

Yet when I sought legal assistance, I was told that even these third-party laboratory results could be attacked because I had personally participated in collecting the samples. The landlord's defense could simply be to allege that I tampered with the evidence.

I believe such an allegation would be extremely difficult to sustain in light of my videos, documentation, repeated leaks, positive laboratory findings, and the complete context of the evidence. Nevertheless, I was told that the mere possibility of such a defense made the case insufficiently certain for an attorney to accept on a pro bono basis.

Think about the impossible position this creates for a tenant.

I was sick. My daughter was sick. We had experienced repeated leaks. Our symptoms correlated with exposure to the affected environment and ceased following effective containment and mitigation. I documented the conditions. I video-recorded my testing procedure. I submitted samples to an independent third-party laboratory. The laboratory confirmed positive results.

And yet I was still told that this evidence could be challenged simply because I was the person forced to collect it.

So I attempted to obtain fully independent professional testing. That testing would cost approximately **\$500**, already a significant financial burden for a disabled single mother. But then

I encountered another barrier: the professional third party needed the landlord's approval and access to conduct the investigation.

The landlord would not provide the necessary consent or access.

This creates an extraordinary and fundamentally unjust catch-22: **the landlord does not want to pay for comprehensive independent testing and remediation, but the landlord can also prevent or obstruct the tenant from paying out of pocket for the independent professional investigation necessary to prove the extent of the problem.**

The very party who may face financial liability, extensive remediation obligations, or litigation if hidden contamination is discovered can effectively control access to the evidence necessary to establish that the contamination exists.

How can that possibly be a fair system?

If I test the environment myself and send the samples to an independent third-party laboratory, I can be accused of tampering.

If I attempt to hire an independent professional to perform the investigation so that nobody can accuse me of tampering, I face hundreds of dollars in costs and may still require the landlord's cooperation or permission for access.

If the landlord refuses that access or cooperation, the independent investigation cannot proceed.

If the independent investigation cannot proceed, I may be unable to create the evidence necessary to compel comprehensive remediation or successfully pursue litigation.

And if I aggressively demand action without having that evidence, I risk conflict with my landlord and potentially losing my housing before I have anywhere safe to go.

That is not merely a bureaucratic inconvenience. It is a system that can trap sick and disabled tenants inside potentially hazardous housing while simultaneously denying them a realistic pathway to prove why they are sick.

I did all of this while I was sick. I investigated the leaks, documented conditions, performed and video-recorded sampling, obtained third-party laboratory analysis, researched environmental contamination, created containment, operated air filtration and dehumidification equipment, communicated with management, sought medical and dental evaluation, cared for and homeschooled my daughter, attended college, and tried to maintain our daily lives while experiencing severe symptoms.

Many people experiencing the level of sickness and suffering we endured might have gone to an emergency room or hospital. Because of my history of sick building syndrome and environmental sensitivities, I generally avoid the emergency room when I can safely manage symptoms at home. I have created a highly controlled home environment with extensive

filtration and environmental mitigation that can be safer for my particular disability-related needs than exposure to an uncontrolled institutional environment. I therefore mitigated at home rather than relying on an emergency room to solve an environmentally driven exposure problem.

This is precisely why the law must require meaningful independent third-party investigation, appropriate testing, professional remediation standards, and post-remediation clearance testing after serious water intrusion and suspected environmental contamination.

A tenant should not have to become her own building scientist, environmental investigator, evidence technician, remediator, medical advocate, and lawyer—all while sick—simply to prove that something inside her home may be harming her family.

The severity of what my daughter and I have experienced from water intrusion, mold, contaminated materials, and faulty or incomplete remediation is difficult to put into words. **We experienced severe pain, suffering, and sickness, and the system left me trapped between continuing to suffer in a potentially hazardous environment and risking the loss of our housing if I fought too aggressively to force proper investigation and remediation.**

One of the most serious problems is that faulty or incomplete remediation can allow mold to repeatedly regrow during periods of moisture, humidity, or recurrent leaks. When proper independent testing, investigation, remediation, and clearance testing are not adequately required or enforced, a landlord may address only what is immediately visible, dry out an area, close walls or flooring, or attempt to clean visible growth without adequately investigating what may remain concealed inside walls, beneath flooring, in crevices, or within water-damaged building materials.

Covering up visible mold or treating a surface with bleach without investigating the underlying moisture source and concealed contamination is, to me, like putting makeup on skin cancer. It may temporarily cover what you can see, but it does not establish that the underlying problem is gone.

Tenants should not have to wait until mold becomes visibly extensive or structural materials begin to rot before meaningful intervention occurs. By that point, occupants may already have suffered prolonged exposure or been forced to leave.

Meanwhile, tenants face an impossible imbalance of power. I have been afraid to aggressively assert my rights or send formal demands because I fear losing my home before I can find another safe place for my daughter and me to live.

California's anti-retaliation protections do not eliminate that fear. My understanding is that the strongest statutory presumption against retaliatory eviction may be limited in time under certain circumstances. The practical reality is that a vulnerable tenant may fear that once that protection expires, a landlord could attempt to terminate the tenancy on another asserted basis, leaving the tenant to bear the burden, cost, stress, and uncertainty of fighting it.

A legal right that a disabled tenant cannot safely exercise without risking homelessness is not an adequate protection.

I feel trapped suffering in a system where inadequate legal and enforcement practices can allow what I consider potentially catastrophic negligence when it pertains to human health. A landlord may have enormously greater financial resources, access to attorneys, control over the property, and power over whether a family continues to have a roof over its head. Meanwhile, the tenant may be sick, disabled, raising a child, financially constrained, and terrified that demanding accountability will result in displacement.

And then comes the next impossible question:

Where are we supposed to go?

My attempts to find alternative housing have only reinforced how serious this crisis has become.

At one property we recently considered, we encountered evidence of serious water damage or rot-related construction and remediation, flea exposure, a loose dog that approached us, and smoking near residential buildings where smoke could enter windows. At another apartment, I encountered warnings regarding **lead and asbestos**.

I find it profoundly disturbing that families can be asked to sign disclosures acknowledging known environmental hazards and then be expected to live there because they have no affordable alternative.

A signature on a disclosure does not make lead safe. It does not make asbestos safe. It does not make mold safe. It does not make a hazardous building healthy for a child or a disabled person.

I believe we urgently need stronger requirements for appropriate independent third-party investigation and testing when there is evidence of significant water intrusion, mold, lead, asbestos, or other serious environmental hazards. People should not be forced to choose between homelessness and signing paperwork acknowledging that the only home available to them may contain substances capable of harming them.

Too many people are trapped in moldy and environmentally catastrophic homes and rentals because the systems intended to protect them are inadequate. When meaningful third-party testing is not readily accessible, when tenants cannot afford expert evidence, when landlords control access to the property, when code enforcement relies too heavily on visible conditions, and when tenants fear retaliation or displacement for demanding action, **the system effectively allows hazardous housing conditions to continue.**

There is another part of this crisis that deserves serious examination.

People suffering from environmentally related exposures may enter the medical system with headaches, respiratory problems, neurological symptoms, pain, fatigue, gastrointestinal

symptoms, skin problems, cognitive difficulties, or other forms of illness, yet the possibility of a building-related environmental exposure may never be meaningfully investigated unless the patient herself is educated enough to raise it.

That creates another devastating catch-22:

A person may become sick because of the building in which they live, but the medical system may treat the symptoms without investigating the building, while the housing system may demand medical or scientific evidence before forcing meaningful action on the building.

The tenant is caught in the middle.

The housing system can say: **Prove the building made you sick.**

The medical system may never ask: **What is happening in the building where you live?**

The landlord can say: **Prove there is hidden contamination.**

And the tenant may be unable to afford the hundreds or thousands of dollars necessary for independent professional investigation, sampling, expert analysis, legal representation, and litigation.

That is not a functioning system of protection. It is a system in which the person with the least money, least power, poorest health, and greatest caregiving burden is expected to carry the greatest burden of proof.

I am not making these statements theoretically. My daughter and I have lived this. We have experienced the pain, sickness, fear, physical labor, financial burden, and psychological strain of trying to remain safe in housing affected by repeated leaks and mold damage while knowing that aggressively demanding accountability could potentially put our housing security at risk.

And this is precisely why finding somewhere safe to move is so difficult. I cannot simply walk into another apartment and assume that because the walls have been freshly painted, the building is healthy.

Paint can hide a stain. Bleach can temporarily alter what is visible. A wall can be closed while moisture or damaged material remains behind it. A disclosure can acknowledge lead or asbestos without making either disappear.

I need a home where my daughter and I can live safely—not another building where I have to become the investigator, remediator, scientist, advocate, and lawyer simply to protect us.

Formal Request for Investigation and Reform

My experience has convinced me that the current system contains fundamental gaps that can leave tenants trapped in potentially hazardous homes while placing the burden of investigation,

evidence collection, scientific proof, medical documentation, legal action, and financial expense almost entirely upon the people who are already sick and least equipped to bear it.

I am therefore formally asking local governments, housing authorities, public-health agencies, code-enforcement departments, elected officials, and legislative bodies to investigate and consider reforms including:

1. **Mandatory independent third-party investigation following significant or recurrent water intrusion**, particularly when occupants report illness or when previous leaks, mold, or incomplete remediation are documented.
2. **Clear standards for investigating concealed moisture and contamination**, including appropriate examination of wall cavities, flooring systems, baseboards, crevices, and other hidden areas where water damage and microbial growth may persist.
3. **Professional remediation standards that go beyond cleaning or treating visible surfaces**. Bleaching, painting over, drying only what is visibly wet, or closing a wall without adequately investigating concealed damage should not be accepted as proof that a property has been safely remediated.
4. **Independent post-remediation clearance testing** when significant contamination or recurrent water intrusion has occurred, so that the same party financially responsible for remediation is not effectively allowed to determine whether its own work was sufficient.
5. **A legally recognized pathway for tenant-obtained laboratory evidence**. Tenants who document their sampling procedures and submit samples to accredited independent laboratories should not find their evidence rendered practically useless merely because they could not afford hundreds or thousands of dollars for an expert to collect the sample.
6. **Protection against landlords obstructing independent investigation**. A landlord should not be able to refuse meaningful access or consent for qualified third-party testing while simultaneously arguing that the tenant lacks adequate independent evidence.
7. **Stronger and longer-lasting anti-retaliation protections**. A tenant should not have to choose between demanding safe housing and fearing eviction once a statutory protection period expires.
8. **Meaningful disability accommodations in housing enforcement and legal processes**, particularly for people whose disabilities limit their ability to repeatedly relocate, litigate, personally investigate environmental hazards, or endure exposure to conventional shelters and temporary housing.
9. **Stronger protections concerning lead, asbestos, mold, smoke infiltration, and other environmental hazards**. Disclosure alone should not become a substitute for safety. A signed form does not neutralize a hazardous substance.

10. **Greater coordination between housing enforcement and healthcare.** The medical system may treat symptoms without investigating environmental exposure, while the housing system may demand medical proof before acting on the building. Families become trapped between two systems, each demanding evidence from the other.
11. **A mechanism for emergency independent testing when occupants report severe symptoms that correlate with a building or affected area and improve following removal, containment, or mitigation.**
12. **Public transparency regarding complaints, recurrent leaks, prior water damage, mold remediation, environmental testing, and code-enforcement history,** so prospective tenants are not unknowingly renting homes with significant histories of unresolved environmental problems.

These reforms should be considered not only in Santa Barbara County, but throughout **Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties**, and wherever existing California law or regulation creates the underlying limitations. Where reform requires state legislation or regulatory action rather than local action, I ask that local officials formally identify those barriers and refer these concerns to the appropriate state agencies and elected representatives.

My Request to Come Home

Throughout all of this, I have continued trying to build a better future.

I returned to college and have worked extraordinarily hard on my education. I have earned multiple associate degrees, made the Dean's List, and been accepted to CSU Chico, where I will continue my education online. I am doing everything within my power to create long-term stability for myself and my daughter.

But education does not eliminate the immediate reality of needing a safe home.

I want to come home to Santa Barbara County.

My connection to Santa Barbara County is deeply personal. As a teenager, I experienced homelessness there as an **unaccompanied minor**, without a parent or guardian providing me with stable housing. I have documentation supporting that history. Despite the extraordinary challenges of those years, Santa Barbara County remains the place I come from and the place I have long wanted to return to.

There is something particularly painful about being unable to return to the place you consider home because housing has become financially inaccessible.

I am therefore asking every housing authority and housing assistance organization receiving this letter:

Please help me understand whether there is any pathway home for my daughter and me.

I am asking to be considered for any program for which we may qualify, including **Housing Choice Vouchers, Section 8 waiting lists, project-based voucher programs, affordable housing communities, disability-related housing programs, family housing, homelessness-prevention programs, CalWORKs-related housing assistance, special-needs housing, reasonable accommodations, local preferences, emergency or hardship programs, and any other available pathway to stable housing in Santa Barbara County.**

If your agency cannot directly assist us, I respectfully ask that you please **forward this letter to the appropriate program, housing authority, caseworker, coordinated-entry program, nonprofit organization, public official, or other agency that may be able to help or address the systemic issues raised here**, rather than simply responding that your particular waiting list is closed.

I am specifically asking:

- Are there any currently open housing waiting lists for which my daughter and I may apply?
- May I apply for Santa Barbara County housing assistance while remaining on a Ventura County waiting list?
- Does my history as an unaccompanied homeless minor in Santa Barbara County provide eligibility for any program or preference?
- Are there preferences or special programs for disabled parents, families with disabled children, CalWORKs participants, or families living in hazardous housing conditions?
- Can I request a reasonable accommodation or individualized review because of disability-related housing needs?
- Are there project-based voucher properties or affordable housing developments with separate waiting lists to which I should apply individually?
- Are there programs specifically designed to help former Santa Barbara County residents return to the community?
- Is there any agency or individual who can help me navigate multiple programs rather than leaving me to independently contact every housing provider while managing disability, parenting, homeschooling, college, and an ongoing housing crisis?

I am not asking for luxury. **I am asking for a safe home where my daughter and I can live without repeatedly confronting mold, water intrusion, smoke, environmental hazards, instability, or the fear that asserting our rights could cost us our housing.**

But I am also asking for more than individual assistance.

I do not want another mother to have to become a building scientist, environmental investigator, evidence technician, remediator, medical advocate, and lawyer while she is sick simply to prove that her home may be harming her child.

I do not want another tenant told that personally collected samples analyzed by an independent laboratory can be attacked because the tenant collected them, only to discover that professional testing costs hundreds of dollars and may require cooperation or access controlled by the very landlord who could face liability if contamination is discovered.

I do not want another disabled family trapped between enduring a potentially hazardous environment and aggressively asserting their rights at the risk of losing their home.

What happened to us should not merely generate sympathy. It should generate investigation and reform.

I am therefore formally requesting **an individualized review of my family's eligibility for housing assistance and a pathway back to Santa Barbara County; a review of the housing and environmental conditions described in this letter; referral of these concerns to appropriate code-enforcement, public-health, housing, disability-rights, and legislative authorities; and substantive consideration of reforms to the laws, codes, remediation standards, testing requirements, evidentiary barriers, and anti-retaliation protections that have allowed this situation to occur.**

I am beginning locally because I believe local government should have the first opportunity to hear directly from the people affected by these systems and to lead meaningful reform. I intend to bring this matter to officials throughout Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo Counties and, where appropriate, to state legislators and California agencies. If necessary, I will also seek review and attention at the federal level.

For approximately eight years, I have waited for housing assistance. During those years, my daughter has grown up. We have endured unsafe conditions, moved seeking safety, encountered further hazards, experienced severe sickness and suffering, and continued waiting. I do not want another eight years of her childhood—or another family's life—to disappear inside a system that desperately needs reform.

Please help us come home. But please also help ensure that what happened to us is not allowed to continue happening to others.

I respectfully request a substantive written response identifying what assistance may be available to my family, which officials or agencies will review the systemic concerns raised here, and what mechanisms exist to formally propose, investigate, and pursue the reforms I have requested.

Thank you for taking the time to read our story. **I am asking you not only to hear it, but to act on it.**

Sincerely,

Tasia Saumier

Ventura County, California