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Sheila de la Guerra *Public Comment*

From: Rabbi Marcia Tilchin <rabbimarcia@jewishcollaborativeoc.org>
Sent: Monday, November 6, 2023 5:47 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: RE: 8 Point County Plan on Isla Vista Bluff Safety
Attachments: Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors.docx

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To Whom it May Concern,

Please share this letter with the Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors in preparation for their upcoming meeting regarding their important conversation about new safety measures in Isla Vista.

Thank you very much,

Rabbi Marcia Tilchin

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Rabbi Marcia Tilchin

November 6, 2023

Dear Supervisors Williams, Capps, Hartmann, Nelson and Lavagino,

I am writing to share my heartfelt thoughts about the importance of the 8 Point County Plan on Isla Vista Bluff Safety that you will be discussing during your upcoming meeting. I reside in Orange County but have been keenly aware of the challenges and dangers in that housing area for nearly 15 years since the tragic death of Noah Jason Krom just one week before he was to graduate UCSB in 2009. I was one of the religious professionals serving the Krom's synagogue at the time, and Noah's death was a community heartbreak for so many reasons, most poignantly because it could have been avoided had proper safety precautions been in place at the time. I was stunned to learn that Noah is but one of 13 students whose lives have been lost on the cliffs of Isla Vista and felt I must weigh in as a religious professional and a parent. Ethical values in all major religions compel each of us to do whatever we can to save a person's life. By implementing these commonsense measures, you are doing just that. Thank you!

As both a spiritual leader and longtime friend of the Krom family, I have witnessed the darkness that has accompanied their journey since they lost their precious Noah. I have no doubt that the families of the other 12 victims have gone through similar hell. Noah's mother did her best to turn her profound loss into opportunities for productive legislation and action in your community but met resistance all too often. Each student death after Noah's is a searing reminder to this family and others who know and care that all is not well in Isla Vista. Gratefully, it appears this is about to change. Moments like this, when hope for meaningful action is reignited, are a source of light for families like the Kroms.

The young adults lost to cliff accidents in Isla Vista over the last two decades could have been any of our children. They were denied the opportunity to realize their destinies as mature adults with beautiful families and meaningful professions. To date, the leadership of the community has chosen to stand idly by. The Talmud teaches, "Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world" (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 37a). This precept is so important that it is also invoked in verse 32 of the 5th Sura of the Quran.

I hope and pray that this current Board of Supervisors has the courage and heart to make life-saving decisions on behalf of all the young men and women who will be blessed to attend college in Santa Barbara in the decades to come. Again, I thank you.

Respectfully,

Rabbi Marcia Tilchin