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May 2, 2023

Governor Gavin Newsom
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for California State Association of Counties (CSAC) AT-HOME Plan to Address Homelessness in California

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Marin County Board of Supervisors, I write to urge your support of the California State Association of Counties' (CSAC) AT-HOME Plan to Address Homelessness in California. We applaud the urgency and leadership you have brought to this issue statewide and the creative solutions you have introduced, including Project Roomkey; Project Homekey; Encampment Resolution Grant programs, and other innovative initiatives.

Since 2017, Marin County has utilized one-time State funding to connect over 1,400 individuals to housing; 2,090 unique clients have been served by our shelter system; and we have housed over 600 chronic homeless individuals – *with 94% remaining currently housed in Permanent Supportive Housing*. We are also nearing a functional end to veterans homelessness locally with 87 having been housed. We have served 316 individuals with temporary shelter through the Roomkey program, and have served nearly 1,300 clients with emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, and outreach with Emergency Solutions Grants. We have also effectively utilized additional housing vouchers, with 207 served via Section 811 Mainstream and another 117 with emergency housing vouchers.

In all, Marin has since 2017 created at least 726 new permanent supportive housing units – and counting – committing over \$25 million of ongoing County general funds for operations and over \$11 million in capital investment – over and above state and federal funds. This includes 507 units at scattered sites with our Landlord Partnership program with the Marin Housing Authority, and 219 units at single sites among five partner organizations in six communities. An additional 69 new permanent supportive housing units come online in FY 2023-24.

While acknowledging these recent accomplishments, helped by the additional State funds made available under your leadership, we also respectfully suggest the CSAC AT-HOME Plan is a critically-needed next step – a roadmap to addressing homelessness while implementing accountability measures for every level of government, including the following six key pillars:

- **Accountability**: Clear responsibilities aligned to authority, resources, and flexibility for all levels of government
- **Transparency**: Integrate and expand data to improve program effectiveness
- **Housing**: Increase and maintain housing units across the spectrum

- [Outreach](#): Develop sustainable outreach systems and increase workforce to support these systems
- [Mitigation](#): Strengthen safety net programs
- [Economic Opportunity](#): Create employment and education pathways, as well as supports for basic needs

We believe the first pillar is of paramount importance as no single level of government can be responsible for solving homelessness. AT HOME elevates homelessness as an important shared California priority, similar to how education, child welfare, infrastructure, etc. are prioritized.

As you know, counties are on the front lines of the homelessness crisis in California, administering most health and human services programs on behalf of the state and federal governments. Marin County provides many safety net services in our county – including behavioral health treatment, employment supports and many public health, child welfare and adult protective services programs – as well as inter-jurisdictional coordination and administrative leadership. We also work collaboratively with our cities and towns to provide assistance to people experiencing homelessness and we have made great strides in recent years.

Collaboration with Our Cities and Towns

As you well know, the policy response to homelessness is complex and straddles all levels of government, from cities and towns to counties, the State, and the federal government. Like counties in the unincorporated areas, cities and towns are responsible for ensuring that adequate affordable housing (including housing affordable to people with extremely low incomes) is available within their jurisdictions and for resolving issues of public safety, including those arising in homeless encampments. Effective solutions require both housing and supportive services as well as involvement of county departments (including community development and public health) and city departments (including public works and law enforcement).

Among our cities and towns, Marin County has accelerated a pathway to housing for 102 individuals thus far with high utilization of city services or in established encampments. We have written grants for our cities, we have funded millions of dollars directly to our cities and town, and we offer a 50% share of costs for services with our cities and towns to address encampments in their jurisdictions – including, for example, mobile shower services. Most recently, the County of Marin committed to match \$1.5 million in new state funding, thanks to the efforts of State Senator Mike McGuire, for \$3.0 million in new investments in three of our cities to address encampments in their communities consistent with permanent supportive housing principals.

Lack of Consistent Coordination and Funding Fragments Solutions

However, counties do all of this with a patchwork of one-time funds and coordination at the state and federal levels, *resulting in counties taking on all of the ongoing risk for the case management services necessary to keep people housed once limited-term funding sunsets; uncertainty regarding the future of new voucher availability; a continuing need for more intensive supports for those with complex needs; and an increase in older adults unable to retain housing or meet basic*

needs. What local governments have been challenged with is the lack of a comprehensive plan to address those who are unhoused and at-risk of becoming unhoused effectively and equitably. The current approach to addressing homelessness appears often fragmented and lacks clear lines of responsibility, accountability and sustainability – from the federal government to states to counties, cities and towns at the community level.

After nearly one year of coordinated effort, counties have come together in partnership to propose the AT HOME plan, including broad goals and specific policy proposals to ensure clear lines of responsibility and accountability for every level of government and to improve the way California collectively responds to those who are unhoused or at risk of becoming unhoused.

AT HOME elevates homelessness as an important shared California priority, similar to how education, child welfare, infrastructure, etc. are prioritized. Again, no single level of government can be responsible for solving homelessness. While California's counties will remain at the frontlines of these crucial safety net programs, we need to work together to acknowledge and address shared values and shared goals among every level of government – and for us each to do our part.

We respectfully urge your embrace and support of the CSAC AT HOME Plan as a partnership and commitment for all of us to play our roles toward mitigation and solution of this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Moulton-Peters, President
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assembly Member Damon Connolly
Marin County Board of Supervisors