



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

August 19, 2020

Andrew Potter
Clerk of the Board
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Potter:

The following is submitted as a recommendation for a Budget Change to the Chief Administrative Officer's Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget:

Health & Human Services Agency – Housing & Community Development Services

Due to the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, many San Diegans are unable to pay their rent. Experts warn of a looming eviction crisis that could leave many San Diegans homeless. It is critical that we do what we can to keep people in their homes. Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) has already created a COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program using Community Development Block Grant funds allocated to the County of San Diego this year. These funds are available to income-eligible individuals in the unincorporated areas and the small cities served by the County's Housing Authority (Coronado, Del Mar, Imperial Beach, Lemon Grove, Poway, and Solana Beach). The program provides a grant of up to \$1,500 per month for a maximum of two months to cover emergency rental costs that is distributed directly to the landlord or property management company.

We are proposing that this existing program framework be expanded with one-time funding in order to serve individuals and families countywide (unincorporated area and 18 incorporated cities). Residents who live within jurisdictions with their own COVID-19 rental relief program would not be eligible for the County program unless those jurisdiction's funds have already been depleted.

The County currently contracts with the Legal Aid Society of San Diego for Fair Housing related services. We should expand the scope of service of this program to ensure that people's rights are protected when it comes to staying in their homes. This

program should also be expanded with one-time funding in order to provide landlord/tenant counseling to prevent evictions whenever possible.

Recommendations:

- 1.) Increase appropriations for COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program in Other Charges in the Health and Human Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Services by \$24,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2020-21 based on revenue from the federal CARES Act funds (\$7,400,000) and General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance (\$16,600,000).
- 2.) Increase appropriations in Services and Supplies to expand support for landlord/tenant services in the Health and Human Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Services by \$1,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2020-21 based on General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance.
- 3.) Recommend that any additional Federal or State stimulus funding, such as CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund allocations, directed to the County of San Diego during Fiscal Year 2020-21, be prioritized for replacement of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance used for this program as a funding source, provided that such use adheres to Federal and/or State guidance published for the referenced stimulus funding and that any unused portion of existing CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund allocations received by the County of San Diego be prioritized for replacement of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance as a funding source used for this initiative.

Respectfully submitted,



NATHAN FLETCHER
Supervisor
Fourth District



GREG COX
Chairman
First District