



October 2, 2023

The Honorable Glenn McGourty, Chair  
The Honorable Maureen Mulheren, Vice-Chair  
The Honorable John Haschak, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
The Honorable Dan Gjerde, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
The Honorable Ted Williams, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors

Dear Chair McGourty and Members of the Board,

The Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD), Board of Directors is pleased to learn that there are four outstanding candidates from Mendocino County seeking appointment to the SMEDD Board of Directors. May we also respectfully observe that there are now two vacancies from Mendocino County.

The District has undergone very significant change over the last 18 months and now is more fully prepared than ever to fulfill its mission of developing, facilitating, and supporting applications for funding from the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Additionally, given the new Community Economic Resilience Fund by the State of California, there exist now even greater opportunities to partner, collaborate and secure funding for vital economic development projects within the two counties.

Given this unique environment, the SMEDD Board of Directors has reviewed the candidates for the open positions from both Mendocino and Sonoma Counties and decided to support a recommendation to you concerning which candidates from Mendocino they believe can make the most impactful contributions to our important work.

Having reviewed the four excellent candidates that have applied, we would most support the following recommendations:

- James M. Mayfield. Rationale: The current board does not have an entrepreneurial representative. Small business is critical to our joint region's economic resiliency and growth. Mr. Mayfield has operated several successful businesses over the last few decades in both Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, is a well-known advocate for economic prosperity and growth in Mendocino County and a very respected philanthropist.



- Dr. Timothy Karas. Rationale: Workforce development is a critical component of any economic development strategy. Dr. Karas has very extensive experience in workforce development both in his current leadership role for Mendocino/Lake Community College District and his prior work in Alameda County. Dr. Karas is the leader of the most significant economic development entity in our County, and his expertise in workforce issues and his knowledge of partnership building would be invaluable to SMEDD's mission.

Let us note that both of the current SMEDD incumbents live in the coastal region of our County. These two applicants reside inland providing better balanced representation.

Based upon our understanding of the important role Board Members play in regional collaboration, we highly recommend these two candidates for their experience and demonstrated community activism.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robin Bartholow".

**Robin Bartholow, Chair**  
SMEDD Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul Garza, Jr.".

**Paul Garza, Jr.**  
Vice-Chair