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COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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August 21, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: State Monitoring List

Dear Governor Newsom:

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Mendocino County has remained a steadfast partner, supporting state public health orders even when restrictions have appeared misaligned with our rural county's specific risk factors. We began sheltering in place prior to the state order. We supported our health officer's obligation to never be less restrictive than the state. When we reached the threshold for Monitoring List, we supported our health officer voluntarily implementing the same restrictions the state would demand, weeks before the state was able to recognize our data.

While we understand our role in an integrated approach, we feel an equal obligation to represent the struggling people of our county. We were relieved by your assurance that restrictions would become surgical and backed by the best available data. Our dynamic of ninety-thousand people distanced across an area greater than the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined necessitates locale specific interventions. With forty-two counties under the same Monitoring List restrictions, we're again observing a mismatch between the one-size-fits-all and our actual risk factors.

Over time and through the heuristic process of pandemic response, we've identified unanticipated consequences related to restrictions on business activity. Most social problems have been amplified concurrent with restricted business activity continuing in an atmosphere of prohibition. In essence, broad state restrictions are catalyzing a loss of business regulation.

For brevity, please consider the misalignment of just one sector: personal care services. In our state's urban centers, a salon might offer more than a dozen stalls with packed waiting areas. In our county, many salons have just one stall and operate on an appointment basis. This heavily regulated sector stepped up to implement even greater precautions, self-certifying with site specific plans under our phase 2 reopening. Salon services are about more than vanity. Clients benefit therapeutically and many seniors receive necessary care they cannot physically perform on their own. Out of our 579 COVID-19

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cases to date, none have been traced to salon activity. In fact, contact tracing has found the majority of our cases to be associated with private social gatherings. The state exemption allowing these businesses to move services outdoors will create new public safety concerns including plumbing, electrical, building code, public property intrusion and more.

We urge you to consider bolstering region specific solutions. Our county has the strength to institute restrictions as necessary to protect public health, but we do not have the financial strength to support the many small businesses on the verge of insolvency. Restrictions backed by transparent local data will build greater public support at a time local government is stretched thin. Please help us to better care for our people.

Sincerely,



John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: Senator Mike McGuire, Assembly Member Jim Wood, California State Association of Counties,
Rural County Representatives of California