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COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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April 18, 2017

Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals (GBHI)
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
US Department of Health and Human Services

Dear US Department of Health and Human Services Agency:

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors voted unanimous support and strongly encourages your favorable consideration of the proposed Access to Treatment and Housing Opportunities in the Mendocino Environment (Finding Home Project) program which will fortify the County's existing Continuum of Care for the Homeless by initiating an ***integrated treatment program for homeless clients with co-occurring disorders, including wrap-around support and linkage to housing and primary health care***. The Board of Supervisors and the Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) have identified housing as a cornerstone of support, recognizing that when individuals lack adequate shelter, their needs for other services and their difficulty in accessing them increase exponentially. The needs for housing and treatment for co-occurring disorders have also been identified as county priorities by numerous other bodies, including those listed below.

- The **HHSA Advisory Board** recently completed a countywide health needs assessment, followed by a community health improvement plan. The plan, which was released in 2016, identifies mental health and housing as two of the counties five highest priorities.
- The Mendocino County **Behavioral Health Advisory Board's** (BHAB) 2015-2016 Annual Report includes several recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors, including: "Provide a housing guide and a housing case manager to assist clients to move off the streets and out of couch-surfing and into regular housing."
- The proposed Finding Home Project Project is fully aligned with the Mendocino County **Homeless Services Continuum of Care** (CoC) priority of institutionalizing countywide utilization of the Coordinated Entry System and universal utilization of the Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to assess the needs of people who are homeless and prioritize them for services based on their needs.
- In recent years the **City of Fort Bragg** and **City of Ukiah** have provided significant resources to assist individuals impacted by homelessness, mental illness and other co-occurring disorders.

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- The HHSA Advisory Board, BHAB and CoC are comprised of literally scores of local government agencies and community based organizations with many dedicated staff members and volunteers but additional resources are needed to effectively assist members of our community who will benefit from Finding Home Project.

We strongly support the attached Finding Home Project proposal and urge you to give it your highest consideration. Thank you for your attention to this proposal.

Sincerely,



John McCowen, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors