

December 4, 2023

Honorable Chair Nora Vargas
Board of Supervisors
San Diego County
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: Opposition to Delay of SB 43 to January 1, 2025

Dear Chair Vargas:

As mayors and elected officials representing the residents throughout San Diego County, we are writing to urge the County of San Diego to implement Senate Bill 43 (SB 43) when it goes into effect on January 1, 2024 and not delay to January 1, 2025.

SB 43 was signed into law earlier this year and provides the first major update to the State's conservatorship laws in decades. It extends this life saving intervention to people with severe substance use disorders and those who cannot provide for their own basic personal safety or medical needs. This legislation helps counties deliver critical public safety and public health services to the most vulnerable people in our communities, promotes safer neighborhoods, and is necessary to connect those with severe behavioral health challenges to treatment.

While the law allows for counties to delay implementation until 2026, our County is experiencing an unacceptable behavioral health crisis – one all of us see clearly every day in our communities. Putting implementation off will cost people their lives, and is an abdication of the County’s responsibility to provide the critical mental health services to the most vulnerable in our communities.

Residents directly feel the impacts of our broken behavioral health system and deserve good faith efforts to implement tools like SB 43 early. These individuals are family members, neighbors, and people who deserve the kind of care counties and hospitals are funded to provide, and should not be left to suffer repeated short term holds for another year. First responders from throughout our region bear the brunt of this broken system each and every day, and residents again pay the price by way of longer response times.

We respectfully ask for the County to not delay SB 43 implementation and to work with cities and other public safety and health partners to expand services to those that need them the most. Our communities expect us to take action now to address the challenges of mental health, addiction and homelessness. We look forward to our continued partnership in taking on these challenges together.

Sincerely,



TODD GLORIA
Mayor
City of San Diego



MARA W. ELLIOTT
City Attorney
City of San Diego



JENNIFER CAMPBELL
Councilmember, District 2
City of San Diego



STEPHEN WHITBURN
Councilmember, District 3
City of San Diego



MARNI VON WILPERT
Councilmember, District 5
City of San Diego



KEITH BLACKBURN
Mayor
City of Carlsbad



RICHARD BAILEY
Mayor
City of Coronado



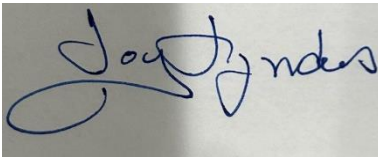
TRACY MARTINEZ
Mayor
City of Del Mar



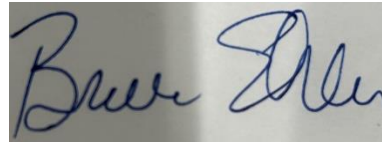
STEVE GOBLE
Deputy Mayor
City of El Cajon



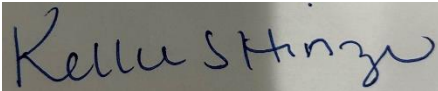
TONY KRANTZ
Mayor
City of Encinitas



JOY LYNDES
Deputy Mayor
City of Encinitas



BRUCE EHLERS
Councilmember
City of Encinitas



KELLIE HINZE
Councilmember
City of Encinitas



ALISON BLACKWELL
Councilmember
City of Encinitas



DANE WHITE
Mayor
City of Escondido



MARK ARAPOSTATHIS
Mayor
City of La Mesa



COLIN PARENT
Councilmember
City of La Mesa



RACQUEL VASQUEZ
Mayor
City of Lemon Grove



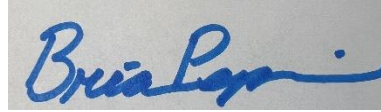
RON MORRISON
Mayor
City of National City



ESTHER SANCHEZ
Mayor
City of Oceanside



STEVE VAUS
Mayor
City of Poway



BRIAN PEPIN
Councilmember
City of Poway

CC: Vice Chair Terra Lawson-Remer
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Jim Desmond
Supervisor Elect Monica Montgomery Steppe
Helen Robbins Meyer, Chief Administrative Officer
Dr. Eric McDonald, Interim Agency Director