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September 12, 2014

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104

RE: HACSC Moving to Work Program Agreement Extension

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Cities Association Board of Directors, I am writing to urge your support of the extension of the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara's current 10-year Moving to Work (MTW) program agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In 2008, Congress selected the Housing Authorities of the County of Santa Clara and the City of San José (HACSC) to be in the MTW program. HACSC has used the MTW designation to help stretch the federal rental subsidy funding upon which thousands of low-income families rely to avoid homelessness and other hardships. Not extending HACSC's MTW program agreement would jeopardize the financial stability of its operations, put those in houses at risk and undermine important local housing initiatives currently underway.

The MTW program gives public housing agencies the flexibility to make strategic program and policy changes to meet the specific affordable housing needs in our local communities. For example, recent changes to our county's Section 8 program (effective September 2013) allowed HACSC to maintain rental assistance to all voucher holders (about 17,000 households) despite the 2013 federal sequester that otherwise would have required the termination of almost 1,000 families from the program. Under MTW, HACSC has streamlined its voucher program and saved about \$5 million in operation costs and efficiencies. This and other cost savings enabled HACSC to assist - during a time of declining federal and state funding for affordable housing - an additional 1,247 households since 2009.

The Cities Association of Santa Clara County is a collaboration of the 15 cities in Santa Clara County. We advocate for issues of mutual interest that have an impact on our region countywide. Santa Clara County's local government, public agencies, nonprofits and affordable housing developers have a proven record of creating local solutions to affordable housing. Together, we have shown that MTW works. California's 7 MTW agencies are assisting more than 66,000 low-income families, about 6,000 more families than baseline funding levels because of their flexibility to design more efficient programs that serve more households and reflect local priorities.

California must protect low-income families and preserve its Section 8 vouchers, and we believe the MTW program is an integral part of the solution. Thank you for all you do on behalf of California's seniors, disabled, families with children, and veterans.

Sincerely,

Steve Tate
President, Cities Association of Santa Clara County
Mayor, City of Morgan Hill