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January 8, 2013

Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria Avenue
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SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution Calling for Enactment of a Federal Ban on Assault Weapons and High Capacity Ammunition Magazines.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Adopt the attached resolution calling for enactment of a federal ban on assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines; and
2. Direct the CEO to incorporate this position into the County Federal Legislative Platform and convey this position to our federal delegation.

DISCUSSION:

The mass murder at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut resulted in the deaths of 28 individuals, mostly 6 and 7 year olds. Twenty-six victims were apparently killed in the ten minutes before the arrival of the local police. If the emergency response had been slower, it is likely that more school children would have lost their lives because of the ammunition capacity of the semi-automatic weapons used by the assailant. On the same date in China, 27 children were attacked by a knife and apparently wounded, but none fatally - imagine the result if assault weapons had been available.

Over the past several years, there has been an increase in acts of violence using semi-automatic weapons with high capacity magazines to slaughter multiple victims, often with velocity and at random. Conversely, during this same time period, the overall crime rate has dropped throughout the United States. The availability of semi-automatic weapons with ammunition clips as large as thirty bullets allows a single perpetrator to kill multiple people in a short period of time. These weapons also pose a grave danger to law enforcement officers.

While California leads the nation in gun control, surrounding states have some of the least restrictive gun laws. Federal regulations offer the best nationwide protection to the public.

In the wake of the Sandy Hook tragedy, Senator Dianne Feinstein, author of the expired 1994 Federal Assault Weapons ban, stated that she intends to reintroduce the Assault Weapons Ban at the start of the 113th Congress in January. Senator Feinstein also declared that she intends to introduce legislation to ban the sale of ammunition magazines that exceed ten rounds capacity. Additional legislative proposals are also likely to be introduced to address related necessary Federal regulations.

Furthermore, tragedies such as Newtown, Connecticut and Aurora, Colorado this past year have put a spotlight on the mental health system. Outrage over a lack of mental health resources available in our nation is leading the charge to strengthen the mental health system. We support that public policy discussion for the health of our communities.

The attached resolution calls for enactment of federal legislation banning assault weapons and ammunition magazines larger than ten rounds capacity, including but not limited to the weapons ban legislation proposed for adoption by Senator Dianne Feinstein. We respectfully urge your adoption of this resolution and incorporation of this position into our federal legislative platform.

Cordially,



Steve Bennett
Supervisor, First District



Kathy I. Long
Supervisor, Third District