



## **PRESS RELEASE DECEMBER 8, 2020**

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### **SANTA BARBARA, SAN LUIS OBISPO, VENTURA COUNTIES REQUEST REMOVAL FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION STAY HOME ORDER** *County Boards of Supervisors Vote to Send Letter to State Requesting New Central Coast Region*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** – Today, the Board of Supervisors from San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties issued a letter to state health officials and California Governor Gavin Newsom to request a separate Central Coast Region composed of the three counties. The letter requests that the Central Coast Region be allowed to exit the regional stay home order as a region after three weeks if the ICU capacity in the three counties exceeds 15 percent.

“The letter being sent to state officials is an accurate measure of our regional distinction through both geography and demographics,” stated Gregg Hart, Chair of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. “We are best positioned to understand the critical needs within our region and have existing partnerships to promote the health and economic well-being of our communities.”

“Our community members and businesses are being unfairly burdened because the State lumped us in with larger metropolitan areas that are geographically, demographically and functionally distinct from the Central Coast,” said Lynn Compton, Chair of the County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors. “The current region that the Governor has placed us in represents almost half of the State’s population but we are a less populated, suburban county that should not be categorized like the metropolitan areas. Reassigning our counties to a smaller Central Coast Region is a necessary step forward that will result in the best outcome for our local economy and our residents.”

“The County of Ventura understands we must all work together to limit the spread of COVID-19; however, we should also consider a regional perspective that most accurately reflects the local reality of our situation,” said Supervisor Kelly Long, Chair of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.

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## TRI-COUNTIES REQUEST REMOVAL FROM SOCAL REGION STAY HOME ORDER ADD 1-1-1

Long continued, “The County of Ventura and our Central Coast regional partners have consistently modeled best practices in our strategies to collectively mitigate the spread of COVID-19, which has protected our shared constituencies and maintained critical hospital capacity. Joining together with a smaller regional approach, allows us to fine tune regulations that protect the health of our residents while getting students back in the classroom and helping to keep our businesses open and economically viable.”

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Director and Public Health Officer spearheaded discussions with San Luis Obispo and Ventura counties about a unified request based on the premise of:

- History of collaboration and partnership among the three county public health departments
- Opportunities to do joint prevention and treatment efforts to reduce case rates and testing positivity
- Higher ICU capacity

The current Southern California Region reported a 10.9 percent ICU bed availability on Monday where the proposed tri-county region reported a 25.6 percent ICU bed availability, well above the threshold of 15 percent that launched the Southern California Region move to the stay-at-home order. Santa Barbara County is reporting 51 percent of ICU beds remain available, while San Luis Obispo County currently has 48.9 percent of ICU beds available.

Allowing this change will not have a significant impact on the ICU availability rates of the remaining counties in the Southern California Region, given their much larger size and populations; yet it will have a tremendous impact on the Santa Barbara, Ventura and San Luis Obispo communities.

For information, contact the counties at:

In **San Luis Obispo County**, community members can visit [www.ReadySLO.org](http://www.ReadySLO.org) or call a staffed phone assistance center at (805) 543-2444 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for more information related to COVID-19.

In **Santa Barbara County**, the public may call 211 or visit the [Regional Stay-at-Home Order site](#) for more information on COVID-19. For county data, go to the [community data dashboard](#). In addition, residents and business operators in Santa Barbara County can submit public comments to the governor’s office via e-mail at [CentralCoastRegionSBC@countyofsb.org](mailto:CentralCoastRegionSBC@countyofsb.org).

In **Ventura County**, community members can stay informed at [www.venturacountyrecovers.org](http://www.venturacountyrecovers.org) and on social media @ CountyofVentura on Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor and Instagram.