

5 *Public Evidence of Empathy Toward*

11 *the Homeless in Los Angeles County*

24 We believe that the proposals we have made to address the crisis of
35 homelessness in Los Angeles County are consistent with the values, beliefs
48 and desires of the vast majority of people in this Southern California area.
63 This area is vast, from the beaches of Santa Monica and Venice to the desert
72 community of Pomona, near San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

84 The large majority of people in L.A. County come from hard working,
95 middle income families. Most people are native to California, though many
107 are immigrants. This area is ethnically diverse. There are ChinaTowns, Little
118 Tokyos, Little Ethiopias, Little Vietnams and the like throughout this region.
129 There are large communities from Latin American countries and places like
140 Lebanon and Armenia. Most are supportive of their neighbors, regardless of
150 their ethnic background, age, the language they speak, their sexual
161 orientation or gender identification. About 50% of people here would likely
173 characterize themselves as religious, and about 65-70% would be would poll
185 as middle-to-left leaning Democrats. Many residents of L.A. County are
198 Veterans, and most have one or more family members who has served.
207 These demographic groups have historically shown empathy toward our
213 struggling homeless segment of the population.

226 Based on the fact that both Proposition H and HHH passed in recent
237 elections, taxpayers have shown a willingness and an interest in helping
247 resolve the issue with affordable housing investments and services. These
260 are ten year commitments on the part of taxpayers with increases in sales
272 tax, which means everyone pays into the fund, even a homeless person
286 buying a food item at a convenience store. There are many resources on line
300 that help explain the funding sources and where the money is intended to be
301 spent.

310 Publicly-funded support accommodations are being made for children
321 in challenging homeless environments, and for those who have homes, but
333 are at risk of becoming homeless. This is evidenced through free early
343 childhood education programs (both state and federally funded), during and
355 after school hours. There is funding and staffing in urban school districts
365 dedicated to homeless and foster youth. Former California Governor Jerry
374 Brown had enhanced public education funding formulas for “Targeted
389 Student Populations” (TSP) in K-12 schools when he was in office in the
400 2010’s, allocating more money per student to poor neighborhoods and less
411 funding to wealthier ones. This kind of support extends through public
424 colleges in the form of free or subsidized tuition for low-income students.

432 During the COVID Pandemic, homeless and impoverished students
443 and their families were provided with free technology devices and free
456 Internet access, as well as free meals, funded both with private and public
457 monies.

465 While some neighborhood groups have assertively fought the
475 establishment of housing for the homeless near their neighborhoods, most
487 communities are willing to accept a modest amount of new construction to
501 meet current needs, as long as it comes with safeguards. By and large, there
514 has been very little pushback from the citizenry in regard to creating housing
526 solutions. People here have seen homelessness all their lives and know the
541 work has to be done. Friends, family, and neighbors we speak to do not want
555 to see homeless people living on our streets, yet know this problem will not
567 be solved overnight, and have shown great patience even with some inept
574 government officials' missteps in addressing the issue.