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California Department of Public Health
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Dear Director Smith,

I am writing to you regarding the application from the Harm Reduction Coalition of Santa Cruz County to operate a mobile syringe services program in some of the outlying communities in our county. Although I support a properly managed County Syringe Services Program due to health concerns for residents, I do not support new or secondary programs demonstrating little or no oversight, and no viable plan to provide those in need with opportunities for other services. Community members across the county and in the city of Capitola are expressing concern about this secondary program, and it is clear there is very little community support for the Harm reduction Coalition of Santa Cruz County.

I am not aware of any outreach by the HRC to the proposed communities they will serve. There was no interaction or coordination with the effected stakeholders such as the business community, Park and Recreation Departments', schools, or law enforcement about the proposed program. Had the outreach been conducted, it is likely that the HRC would have learned of the disapproval of their proposal.

Santa Cruz County is a compassionate and caring community and many residents are weary of the drug abuse that has plagued the county and region for many years. Residents want to visit our parks, beaches and open spaces without fear of discarded syringes and associated problems. I am sure the Harm Reduction Coalition is well intentioned, however, simply handing out more syringes is a very limited approach to the issue of addiction.

Thank you for carefully examining this application and properly evaluating the value of this secondary syringe services program in Santa Cruz County.

Regards,

Terry McManus, Chief of Police