

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-5390
(530) 622-3645 Fax

KIM DAWSON
Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

JOHN HIDAHL
District I
GEORGE TURNBOO
District II
WENDY THOMAS
District III
LORI PARLIN
District IV
BROOKE LAINE
District V

January 24, 2024

Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil
1021 O Street, Suite 7240
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via email

Assemblyman Joe Patterson
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
Via email

Re: Native Directions/HomeCA Treatment Centers

Dear Senator Alvarado-Gil and Assemblymember Patterson,

We are reaching out to you for assistance regarding the Native Directions/HomeCA Substance Treatment Centers planned for development in rural neighborhoods in El Dorado County. These planned 30-bed treatment centers have become an issue of great concern to the community and county. We are looking to you to assist with ensuring that the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is doing everything in its power to oversee these projects and minimize the negative impacts of these planned projects and, preferably, relocate them to a more suitable location.

In 2021 the State Legislature passed AB 172, which established the Community Care Expansion Program to fund much-needed treatment centers. An unintended consequence of AB 172 is that it completely overrides local land uses and allows nonconforming uses to automatically be considered conforming, which bypasses enforcement of regulations that would normally provide for quality of life, compatibility, and public health and safety. These types of actions by the State Legislature erode the public's trust in government at all levels.

Some of the many concerns include, but are not limited to:

- Conflicting and confusing information and oversight of the DHCS application process and project development.
- Inadequate roads for commercial activity will create hazardous conditions.
- Water availability in a rural area that is served by wells cannot sustain a high-volume water user. The current infrastructure is intended to support single family rural homes with wells and conventional septic systems.
- Emergency services are already strained and underfunded in El Dorado County due to low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates. The proposed projects are Medi-Cal dependent and will exacerbate an already fragile system.
- Fire safety is a top concern in the State of California and the planned locations are in a remote, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone with challenging ingress and egress. El Dorado County has suffered from catastrophic wildfires in 2021 and 2022 and we need to be mindful of placing a vulnerable population of patients in an area without an in-depth fire plan, including hazardous vegetation clearance, adequate ingress/egress, and other safety requirements that would be required of a facility of this size outside of the SB 172 exemption.

We appreciate your interest and engagement in this issue and look forward to working with you to address these concerns.

Wendy Thomas
Chair, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

cc: Lauren Hernandez, District Director to Senator Alvarado-Gil