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Board Supports Proposition 36 and Authorizes Ballot Measure for November

Measure would require Drug Treatment as a Condition of Receiving County Funded Public Assistance

Stockton, CA – At its special meeting, the Board of Supervisors voted to support Proposition 36, which would repeal Proposition 47 and restore common sense to the issues of homelessness, drug addiction and theft reduction in California. The measure was passed unanimously by the Board of Supervisors. The Board took separate action to place a measure on the local ballot to limit county public assistance to substance abusers and addicts who refuse treatment.

“Today the Board took action in response to overwhelming public support for reform in how we address homelessness, drug addiction, and theft in San Joaquin County,” commented Board Chairman Miguel Villapudua. “Our Board continues to place public safety as our top priority, and our action today shows that commitment. We continue to support mental health and substance abuse programs throughout our community to address the curse of illegal drugs that pose a danger to our residents, but we also have taken these steps today to reinstate some of the consequences for illicit drug use in San Joaquin County.”

Proposition 36, the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act is a bi-partisan measure that provides common sense, targeted reforms to Proposition 47 that legislative proposals alone are unable to deliver. It will hold repeat offenders accountable for the safety of our communities, rather than putting them back on the streets. Proposition 36 will define fentanyl as a hard drug, hold individuals convicted of trafficking fentanyl accountable, and grant judges greater discretion in sentencing drug traffickers. It will provide critical mental health, drug treatment services, and job training within our justice system for people who are homeless and suffering from mental illness or struggling with substance abuse.

“In my interactions, the issue of homelessness comes up daily, and I appreciate the Board’s support of Proposition 36 and the general assistance measure, which will restore accountability in San Joaquin County,” added Supervisor Tom Patti, Third District Supervisor. “The dangers of fentanyl, the crime inflicted upon our small business owners, and the encampments that crowd our streets show that previous efforts have not been sufficient response, and we are determined to do more.”

Separately, the general assistance measure to be considered by voters in November would require anyone who receives General Assistance benefits to be screened for substance use disorder if the County reasonably suspects the person to be dependent on illegal drugs. When screening indicates a recipient may be dependent on illegal drugs, the County will provide a professional evaluation and may refer the recipient to an appropriate treatment program. If that program is available at no cost, the recipient will be required to participate to continue receiving General Assistance benefits. The measure does not require recipients to maintain sobriety to be eligible for benefits.