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**Board Supports Local Small Businesses**

*Additional grant funds for small businesses available*

**Stockton, CA** – At its meeting on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors authorized an additional \$250,000 from the Employment and Economic Development Department’s (EEDD) Small Business Assistance Grant Program (SBAG) to fund the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce’s security camera program. The grant is part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and must be used to respond to the negative impacts of the public health emergency (COVID-19) including aid to impacted industries. The camera grants will support local businesses’ fight against retail theft and assist local shoppers.

“The Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of our small businesses,” commented Board Chairman Miguel Villapudua. “With these grants, our small businesses can protect their investment, their property and their employees. We know that these business owners are invested in our community, and we are proud to support them in this way. The money businesses save can be invested back into their business and our community.”

Stockton Takes Action Against Retail Theft “STAART” will provide San Joaquin County small business owners one-time grants to install a camera system in their place of business. Grants will be administered by the Greater Stockton Chamber and be available to businesses countywide, on a first-come, first-served basis, until funds are exhausted. The maximum grant amount is \$2,000 per property. The Board authorized an additional \$250,000 in funding. This money is in addition to the \$500,000 that was authorized earlier this year.

“We have been encouraged by the interest and response that we have gotten from our local community for these security camera grants,” added Timm Quinn, the CEO of the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce. “The Chamber appreciates the additional funding from the Board to assist additional small businesses. More than 140 businesses have already applied for this aid, we will be able to help an additional 125 businesses with this new funding.”

The STAART program is a retail theft prevention initiative designed to tackle the serious epidemic that is currently wreaking havoc on our business community, resulting in substantial financial losses, wasted time, and diminished future revenue. By building upon existing initiatives aimed at combating retail theft in San Joaquin County, the STAART program takes a proactive approach to engage in activities and strategies aimed at mitigating crime effectively.

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