



# FARM BUREAU SAN DIEGO COUNTY

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November 9, 2010

The Honorable Pam Slater-Price  
San Diego County  
Board of Supervisors  
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335  
San Diego, CA 92101-2471

Dear Chairwoman Slater-Price:

As you move closer to a decision point on the General Plan Update we want to make certain there is no confusion on the Farm Bureau's position and what we see as reasonable action in regards to the thousands of acres of working farmlands in the county.


It remains our conviction that a reduction in the value of a farmer's land is a serious impediment to the continued success of that farm. Essentially, a change in the General Plan that reduces property values for farms is no different than the cataclysmic loss of home values that has been central to our nation's economic distress. However, hope remains that home values will rebound. An action by you that strips value from farmland would be permanent and the resulting damage suffered by farmers would not be subject to recovery.

We have sought solutions but come back time and again to the need to protect the equity farmers have in their land. On its own, the adoption of a PACE program will not get us there. Equity protection must cover the differential between pre and post-General Plan Update land values. While various funding sources have become recent subjects of conversation, we have seen nothing that leads us to believe that secure funding spanning the life of the General Plan is available. Absent secure funding and a commitment to protect current farm values, a PACE program has no connection to the General Plan Update nor moves us towards a solution. In more than a decade of work by county planners a funding source has yet to be identified. At this point it is obvious that a secure funding source is not within reach.

As a result of the lack of an equity protection program we see the only solution to be the adoption of a new map and programs, such as the assurance of access to a conservation subdivision option. A new map would have to be devoid of damaging downzones to farmland.

While we acknowledge the desire to put the General Plan Update behind us, protecting the financial integrity of farmers is too important to ignore.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Larson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "L".

Eric Larson  
Executive Director

Cc: Vice-Chairman Bill Horn  
Supervisor Greg Cox  
Supervisor Dianne Jacob  
Supervisor Ron Roberts