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August 22, 2024

Ms. Michelle Baass
Director
California Department of Health Care Services
Mail Stop 4100
P.O. Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

Ms. Kim Johnson
Director
California Department of Social Services
774 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

via email

Dear Director Baass and Director Johnson:

I am writing to express concerns regarding a proposed treatment center in rural El Dorado County by Native Directions, Inc. This issue has been brought to my attention by a significant number of my constituents who are concerned about this proposal. As you know, the County of El Dorado has also expressed concerns and has sought clarification regarding administrative review of project entitlements. I have serious questions about whether the proposed project meets the requirements outlined in the law to qualify for waivers of the standard project entitlement process.

The proposed treatment center raises several significant concerns within the local community. First, the project lacks the intended collaborative approach with the community, as mandated by law. Additionally, the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) requires a letter of support from the local lead agency, the Board of Supervisors, which Native Directions has not obtained.

Another critical concern is the lack of clarity on the environmental impact of this treatment center. There are legitimate concerns that need to be addressed through a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis. Specific issues include the facility's location in an area with very high fire risk, inadequate roads that could

exacerbate traffic hazards, and limited infrastructure, such as insufficient water availability.

While the law allows *tribal* governments and organizations formed by *tribal governments*, Native Directions, Inc is neither of those. Their attorney claims that its recognition by Indian Health Services meets the statutory requirement; however, Native Directions, Inc is a non-profit entity that is not formed by a federally recognized tribe.

The only federally recognized tribe in El Dorado County, the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, has stated in writing that it is not working with Native Directions, Inc. It is my firm belief that Native Directions, Inc. does not meet the spirit or plain language of the law that is intended for expedited review *only* when working in partnership with a local government or a project of a tribal government.

While there have been letters of support submitted, it appears none of those letters are from community leaders or elected officials. The law requires a collaborative approach by mandating community support and the application fails to establish any at all from local electeds, local governments, local federally recognized tribe, or any other community leader.

Thank you for addressing these critical concerns. I look forward to your prompt response and any measures you can take to resolve these issues. Should you need any further information or wish to discuss this matter in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (916) 435-0501.

Sincerely,



Joe Patterson
State Assemblyman, District 5



Marie Alvarado-Gil
State Senator, District 4