

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_(CM)

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE EXPRESSING  
OPPOSITION TO FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS TO SAFETY NET  
PROGRAMS THAT HELP PROVIDE BASIC NEEDS TO SUPPORT TO  
RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Watsonville is home to more than 50,000 people and is a growing and thriving community with many employment, education and recreation opportunities for children, adults, and older adults; and

**WHEREAS**, as with many counties, cities and towns in California and across the nation, a percentage of the population of seniors, veterans, students and families faces difficulty meeting basic needs each month, even when working full or part time, with a current estimated 15.1% poverty rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau; and

**WHEREAS**, safety net programs such as CalFresh (known as SNAP at the federal level), Medi-Cal (known as Medicaid federally), CalWORKs (TANF at the federal level), school-based nutrition programs, and other programs operated by cities, counties, and states under federal rules and regulations help to increase food, healthcare and housing security and the overall quality of life for thousands of Santa Cruz County residents each month, while also supporting the local economy through millions of dollars of expenditures at local grocers, health care providers, and other vital businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, in Santa Cruz County, 41,765 households received CalFresh benefits in January 2024, valued at \$69,574,207 per year, with most of these benefits funded by the federal government; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pajaro Valley Unified School District currently benefits from the Community Eligibility Provision which enables 16,500 children at 34 district schools to receive free school meals in a simplified manner with minimal paperwork on their families' part; and

**WHEREAS**, current Congressional proposals at the federal level, if approved, could result in substantial cuts to safety net programs, ranging from changes to eligibility and benefit levels, imposition of harsh work requirements, significant reduction in Community Eligibility Provision eligibility levels, and establishing or increasing state shares of cost for programs where today there are no state shares (such as in CalFresh/SNAP) or where federal matching funds are today an uncapped entitlement (such as in Medi-Cal/Medicaid); and

**WHEREAS**, the level of cuts under discussion to critical safety net programs would, if approved, almost certainly require significant state funding to maintain eligibility and benefits or otherwise result in cuts to the level of benefits received in these programs, who is eligible for the programs, and under what rules and requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the USDA Economic Research Service, each \$1 in SNAP creates as much as \$1.80 in total economic activity as benefits are spent in grocery stores, and every \$1 billion in SNAP benefits creates 13,560 jobs across our farming, trucking, grocery, and other sectors. Proposed cuts will not only create hunger but harm our food and farming economy; and

**WHEREAS**, these potential cuts to safety net programs would have a broadly negative impact on the quality of life and economy in Santa Cruz County, not only those who directly receive benefits through these programs but for all residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has already expressed significant concerns with these proposed cuts to SNAP and other programs will harm cities across the county

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:**

1. The City opposes federal cuts to safety net programs that would result in increased state costs, lower benefit levels and reduced eligibility for services as well as create economic harm across numerous city economic sectors.

2. The City urges its Congressional delegation members to protect the most vulnerable members of our community and support economic activity by voting against legislation that would, directly or indirectly, result in cuts to safety net programs.

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