



Board of Supervisors

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June 8, 2023

Mr. Jeff Macomber
Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
1515 S Street
Sacramento CA 95811

RE: Proposed Adult Institution Closure in Riverside County

Dear Secretary Macomber:

On behalf of the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, I write to share our perspective regarding the planned closure of Chuckawalla Valley State Prison (CVSP), located in the City of Blythe at the easternmost edge of Riverside County. The Board of Supervisors joins other community voices in urging you to consider an alternative plan that would help the state meet its goals of reducing the state's prison footprint, while protecting a vital community asset in Blythe that offers well-compensated and likely irreplaceable jobs along with an array of broad economic benefits.

CVSP serves as an anchor in the community of Blythe, acting as a multiplier of community vitality as well as economic and educational benefit. Families of CVSP employees as well as families of those who are incarcerated make Blythe their home. It is a more financially feasible housing market with median home prices hovering around \$220,000, meaning home ownership is far more within reach than in most other parts of the state. CVSP also plays a critical role in maintaining Palo Verde Hospital, which is the only community hospital within 50 miles of the city. Additionally, Palo Verde College has many critical ties to the facility ranging from workforce training to continuing education of CVSP staff and incarcerated persons. Further, the local K-12 schools are educating the children of both staff and those in custody in the institution. If the facility were to be shuttered, it is difficult to imagine the extent of the devastation – widespread job loss, a cratered real estate market, diminished tax base, and a hospital, schools, and community college that may no longer be viable.

The California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) in Norco, situated in the western edge of the County, would be far more suitable for closure instead of CVSP. CRC is a much older facility with considerably higher costs of maintenance and operation. Unlike the community support enjoyed by CVSP, the community of Norco has called for CRC's closure for some time. Further, by virtue of its location in a highly urbanized part of the County, CRC presents far

more opportunities for reuse. Simply stated, CRC is a much more fitting candidate for closure than CVSP.

While the County of Riverside would prefer that none of its three prison facilities would be subject to closure – out of concern for the disruption to the region, the facility’s employees, and those who are incarcerated within – we urge CDCR to reconsider its decision to shutter CVSP and, instead, focus its decommissioning on CRC. We thank you for considering our perspective along with the perspective of other communities and voices in the Palo Verde Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Jeffries".

Supervisor Kevin Jeffries
Chair, County of Riverside Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, County of Riverside Legislative Delegation
City of Blythe, Mayor, City Council & City Manager
City of Norco, Mayor, City Council & City Manager