To: Councilmember Jennifer Campbell, Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, SDPD Officer David Surwilo, Public Health Officer Dr. Wilma Wooten, Mayor Kevin Faulconer

The Ocean Beach Council Board of Directors is writing to you today to again implore your offices to do something about the unacceptable levels of crowds gathering in our beach community during this public health crisis.

San Diego County and California Public Health officials have issued orders to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The order instructs residents to, among other things, stay home except to take care of essential needs, go to an essential job, go to a reopened business, or go out for exercise. The order states residents must practice social distancing, avoid gatherings of ANY size, and wear a face covering when within six feet of anyone from another household.

These orders also place extreme regulations on our local business community to re-open safely. Customers and staff are required to social distance, businesses must be licensed, sterilization requirements are in place, and capacity is heavily restricted if allowed at all. This is especially true of our OB Farmers Market, which has been forced to implement expensive, time-consuming, and labor-intensive precautions to protect the community.

There is a clear double standard for the residents and businesses in Ocean Beach. We are witnessing very large crowds and vendors gathering in Veterans Plaza throughout the week, and especially every Wednesday evening. Consistently on Wednesday’s, there are hundreds of people closely gathered on the lawn with live amplified music, unpermitted food and craft vendors, drug sales, and more. It continues to be nothing short of mayhem in our public spaces. These mass gatherings continue into the early hours of the morning disrupting our residents. The city provided trash cans overflow in our parks as well as on our beach, and we are left cleaning up the mess made with the help of local volunteers. Our own volunteer board members have collected over 6,000 gallons of trash in just the past eight weeks!

The illegal STVRs which run rampant in our neighborhood continue to provide daily rentals to tourists who do not adhere to public health orders and further endanger the residents of Ocean Beach. These STVR units typically have exceedingly more occupants than a typical residential unit which is further contributing additional large groups of people to the community.

Our neighborhood should not be used as a playground for crowds of people who do not take the public health and safety of others seriously and come here to act irresponsibly in our community. People live here. Enough is enough. We are calling on you as our elected representatives to immediately begin providing adequate trash services in public spaces, to put an end to the disruptive, dangerous, and prohibited activities taking place in our front yard, and to enforce the zoning laws as it pertains to illegal short-term rentals.

The Ocean Beach Town Council Board of Directors

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