



Humboldt County Visitors Bureau

June 22, 2021

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 5th Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Supervisors,

The Humboldt County Visitors Bureau (the Bureau) respectfully submits this appropriation request for one-time funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for your serious consideration. We understand that you have designated \$7.89M of the ARPA monies for economic development, considered vital for small businesses and nonprofits.

As a small nonprofit whose focus is to bring tourism revenue into the county through marketing, we are requesting \$600,000 of which 100% will be solely used for complete marketing services for the County of Humboldt. More than 80% of the funds will remain in Humboldt. (See Marketing Budget detail). This funding will ensure the Bureau can successfully keep Humboldt in front of the millions of prospective travelers as a desirable destination for years to come. This will be especially important when international travel resumes and US residents look to Europe and Asia for vacations.

The Bureau should be considered a priority. As evidenced in previous years, tourism revenue plays a major role in the economic health of the County, in 2019 bringing in \$41.8M in TOT and sales tax.

An investment in the Bureau comes with a guaranteed return, revenue that positively impacts all areas of the County and its residents: visitors spending time in Humboldt spend at multiple locations, support local businesses and put dollars into the pockets of workers and ultimately into the general fund.

The tourism industry is a leading constituent and integral part of the long-term solution for moving the County through post-COVID recovery to a sustainable future. With ARPA support, Humboldt tourism will be a top income generator over the next five years.

Since the onset of COVID 19, Humboldt County has experienced a 40.5% reduction in direct travel-related spending, with food service and retail sales sustaining considerable losses. (See Dean Runyan report). However, as a rural county, Humboldt experienced a small reduction in visitors with, by year-end, accommodations seeing high volume trade. This trend of in-country tourism will continue until the return of international travel.

This funding is also an investment in the health and wellbeing of county residents. Tourism contributes to building better destinations and experiences for locals and visitors alike. The Bureau's work aligns tourism, community and economic development. It is a shift from promoting communities to building communities. **Quality of life for residents = Quality of experience for visitors.**

This investment in and commitment to marketing Humboldt needs to happen now.

As the county destination marketing and management organization, the Bureau's function is twofold : a) advocate for rural tourism and b) market all regional assets.

- The Bureau's role is to ensure that all regions throughout Humboldt County thrive in today's increasingly competitive tourism landscape. The Bureau will focus on providing the smaller stakeholder communities leverage against competing Counties by representing them in the national and international tourism market.
- The Bureau is the only organization in the County with the national and international travel trade partnerships, media contacts and, most importantly, the expertise to promote all county visitor assets to a national and international audience with consistent, creative, engaging and successful multi-platform marketing.
- The Bureau's marketing efforts are effective, resulting in the County receiving increased national and international media attention and expanded global awareness as a 'desirable' destination, and desirability is the ultimate creator of a vibrant economy.
- As the County DMMO, the Bureau will take the lead working with County Chambers, businesses and organizations to deliver impactful targeted marketing, and the analytical support upon which to base future efforts. This includes cannabis tourism, festivals and specialized events.

The Bureau will submit quarterly reports to the Board of Supervisors detailing marketing initiatives and provide comprehensive tourist and travel data and analytics. These reports will be shared with stakeholders and partners.

In January 2021, HCVB voted in a new, diverse Board of Directors who represent the entire county and bring a multiplicity of professional and personal expertise and connections within and outside the county. All recognize the crucial relationship between tourism, economic development and community wellbeing. This means promoting all areas of life including arts and culture, Indigenous culture, culinary, health and wellness, and cannabis opportunities.

In addition to the current County TOT annual support of \$200K, the Bureau Board of Directors will work with regions, cities/towns throughout the County to secure support and fully fund the future Bureau. We sincerely hope that you will choose to invest in the economic wellbeing of the County, its residents and visitors.

Attached please find a marketing budget, the Dean Runyan Direct Travel Impact Report, and ten letters of support.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and your continued support of the work of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau.

Sincerely,



Libby Maynard
President, HCVB Board of Directors



Julie Benbow
Executive Director, HCVB



Humboldt County Visitors Bureau

2021-2022 Board of Directors

Libby Maynard, *President*: Co-founder and current Executive Director of the Ink People. Libby serves on five Boards throughout the county and state.

Jeff Durham, *Vice President*: Independent hotel owner in Fortuna, and Yountville. Chair of the California Association of Boutique Breakfast Inns (CABBI), Board Member of the California Hotel & Lodging Association.

Pete Oringer, *Treasurer*: Retired businessman, community leader.

Dr. Ara Pachmayer, *Secretary*: Professor of Tourism Management and a tourism researcher at Humboldt State University.

Directors

Chris Ambrosini: Managing Partner of the Best Western Plus, Humboldt Bay Inn.

Paul Beatie: Owner of the Old Steeple and property/business owner on Ferndale.

Lowell Daniels: Owner of the iconic Victorian Inn and Redwood Suites in Ferndale.

Jenny Early: Marketing professional, President of the Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce, Board member of the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association and the Redwood Highway Gateway Foundation.

Ken Hamik: Business owner (McKinleyville, San Francisco) Ken is an entrepreneur and futurist. President of the Arcata Chamber of Commerce.

Shannon Hughes: Business owner based in Willow Creek. Serves on the Willow Creek Community Services District Board and the China Creek Bigfoot Museum.

Justin Legge: General Manager & Site Naturalist Benbow KOA & Benbow Historic Inn. He is also the only certified Forest Bathing guide in the County.

Aaron Ostrom: Business owner (Pacific Outfitters, and Pacific Outfitters Adventures). Started PacOut Green team, a non-profit doing weekly community clean-ups.

Ex Officio - Marc Rowley: Retired Board President, Owner Coho Cottages & China Creek Cabins in Willow Creek. Marc has served on many community boards and continues to support county initiatives and local business.

**Humboldt County Visitors Bureau
2021 - 2022 Draft Budget**

	Income	\$ 805,000.00		
	Expenses	\$ 794,000.00		
	Income			
	County TOT	\$ 205,000.00		Estimated County TOT Annual Funding
	Federal	\$ 600,000.00		ARPA - OneTime funding
	Total	\$ 805,000.00		
	Expenses:			
1	Payroll	\$ 125,000.00		ED, Office Staff, Taxes etc.
2	Operations / Admin	\$ 64,500.00	\$ 189,500.00	Insurances, overheads, contracts
3	Marketing			
	Payroll**	\$ 170,000.00		New hires
	Marketing*	\$ 193,500.00		All marketing efforts
4	Research	\$ 33,000.00		STRs, AirDNA, Geo tracking
4	Printed Materials	\$ 45,000.00		Map&Guide, 12 HAG brochures, 25 Things
5	Brochure Distribution	\$ 28,000.00		Fulfillment throughout county, state and other
6	Media Contract	\$ 80,000.00		For targeted national reach
7	Partnerships	\$ 45,000.00		NCTC, CAD, Cultivar Strategies
8	Marketing Contingency	\$ 10,000.00		
			\$ 604,500.00	
	Total	\$ 794,000.00		
	* Marketing Breakdown			
		\$ 45,000.00		New website
		\$ 12,000.00		Access & Hosting
		\$ 1,000.00		Workflow software
		\$ 45,000.00		Online Advertising
		\$ 45,000.00		Original Content creation , copy & photos
		\$ 20,000.00		Video creation, editing etc
		\$ 5,000.00		Media / Fam / Influencer hosting
		\$ 6,500.00		Consumer Trade Shows
		\$ 10,500.00		Professional / Trade Meetings
		\$ 3,500.00		Stakeholder / group / event sales
			\$ 193,500.00	
	** Marketing Staff			
				Marketing Director
				Digital / Social Media
				Sales, Community Liaison
		\$ 170,000.00		Taxes, workers Comp, insurances
			\$ 170,000.00	
	NOTE:	\$ 600,000.00		Dedicated to County marketing endeavors.

Humboldt County / Detail Trend

Direct Travel Impacts 2011-2020p

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2019-2020
Direct Travel Spending (\$Million)											
Destination Spending	352.3	354.0	364.8	381.1	392.9	399.9	421.3	452.9	446.5	265.5	▼ -40.5%
Other Travel*	37.5	34.1	31.7	31.1	29.6	28.7	30.8	33.3	37.3	13.7	▼ -63.3%
TOTAL	389.8	388.1	396.6	412.2	422.5	428.6	452.1	486.2	483.7	279.2	▼ -42.3%
Visitor Spending by Type of Traveler Accommodation (\$Million)											
Hotel, Motel, STR	166.5	166.3	175.3	188.2	201.7	207.2	217.8	233.6	219.3	146.7	▼ -33.1%
Private Home	74.0	73.2	72.4	72.3	68.1	68.6	74.0	81.4	84.4	29.8	▼ -64.6%
Campground	49.3	51.8	53.8	55.8	56.9	57.5	60.4	63.3	68.3	57.4	▼ -15.9%
2nd Home	11.7	11.8	11.5	11.6	12.1	12.3	13.0	14.2	14.5	16.6	▲ 14.6%
Day Travel	50.8	51.0	51.9	53.2	54.1	54.2	56.1	60.4	60.0	14.9	▼ -75.2%
TOTAL	352.3	354.0	364.8	381.1	392.9	399.9	421.3	452.9	446.5	265.5	▼ -40.5%
Visitor Spending by Commodity Purchased (\$Million)											
Accommodations	68.5	69.5	74.6	81.8	89.8	94.3	99.6	103.8	96.9	83.8	▼ -13.5%
Food Service	98.6	99.7	103.7	106.9	113.3	117.4	122.9	132.4	131.2	69.2	▼ -47.3%
Food Stores	25.3	26.3	26.5	27.4	28.5	28.5	28.9	29.6	30.3	20.1	▼ -33.7%
Local Tran. & Gas	63.3	61.9	60.0	62.3	58.8	54.8	59.5	67.9	67.7	33.7	▼ -50.2%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	50.1	50.9	52.8	54.4	56.3	57.3	58.5	61.6	59.6	30.2	▼ -49.4%
Retail Sales	40.9	40.9	41.8	43.0	40.4	40.6	44.8	50.6	52.5	24.8	▼ -52.8%
Visitor Air Tran.	5.5	4.8	5.5	5.2	5.7	7.0	7.1	7.0	8.3	3.7	▼ -55.5%
TOTAL	352.3	354.0	364.8	381.1	392.9	399.9	421.3	452.9	446.5	265.5	▼ -40.5%

Details may not add to totals due to rounding. Percent change calculated on unrounded figures.

*Other Travel includes ground transportation and air travel impacts for travel to other California visitor destinations, travel arrangement services and convention/trade shows services.

Economic impacts are attributed to visitor trips which are defined as trips taken by individuals that stay overnight away from home, or travel more than 50 miles one-way on a non-routine trip, as defined by the California Tourism Marketing Act

Date: June 23rd, 2021

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing in support of the Humboldt County Visitor Bureau to urge your support for one time grant of 600k from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds.

As a professional Naturalist Guide who moved to from the SF Bay Area in 2009 to attend HSU, I feel my perspective on Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Trends has great weight. For the last decade I have worked, lived, and played all around Humboldt as an Outdoor Professional. Living in the City of Arcata and around the Humboldt Bay Area, to living in the Northernmost community of Orick and Redwood National Park, to now being based in the Southernmost community of Benbow and Garberville, I consider myself an ambassador for this County, and understand well the quirks of our different regions.

Having shared Guided Experiences with guests from all over the world on the Ocean at Trinidad, in the streams of Fern Canyon, and through the ancient forests of Humboldt Redwoods, I know intimately *the reasons why people decide to visit our County*, their dreams and desires. It would be a pleasure to share with the Board of Supervisors some special things in our county, you likely have not fully experienced, to understand what our visitors come here for.

What ties our county together is our access to pristine and beautiful outdoor areas that most of the world can only dream of. Some locals themselves take this for granted, and many have not experienced what I show open minded and eager Tourists in just a day.

Through my work, I have been blessed to be able to engage with visitors from across the world. I often ask why they chose to visit our county. The most common answer is "To intimately experience pristine natural environments, in uncrowded areas, with authentic local experiences."

As a Certified Forest Therapy Guide, I know people from around the world are eager to get out and experience the natural world, and are willing to spend as much of their budget on an experience as they are on their hotel room. A group of Psychologists from New York came to Orick just for this private experience. Having the SF Bay Area and Sacramento so close by, we have the perfect market to increase our Tourism Revenue significantly.

The value the County Visitor Bureau has brought to the small businesses I have worked with is invaluable. A significant portion of our revenue stream can be directly tied to the Outside Marketing Efforts of the Humboldt County Visitor Bureau. The level of commitment and support I have witnessed the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau give to our local small businesses and community is invaluable.

The fact that the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau has been able to provide such an exceptional level of service, within the tight operating budget constraints, is a magnificent accomplishment.

This is a tipping point in the Travel Industry towards sustainable outdoor tourism. Humboldt County needs to be prepared to receive this, and be in a striking position with our Marketing and Outreach, which can only be successfully accomplished by an organization such as the Humboldt Visitors Bureau with the skills and experience they hold.

I know if the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau is granted this request of one-time 600k from the ARPA, the value it would bring to our County cannot be overstated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Legge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Legge

Benbow KOA - General Manager

Benbow Historic Inn - Site Naturalist

Office: (707) 923 - 2777

Email: BenbowKOA@BenbowInn.com



Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing today to encourage your continued support of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau and expressly grant their one-time ask of \$600,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding.

As a local business owner (101 Things to Do Visitors Guides), Past Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Eureka Chamber of Commerce, Board Member of the Humboldt Community Services District, Past President of the Rotary Club of Eureka, Humboldt Coordinator for Toys for Tots, I want to express to you all how important the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau is to our community.

Through my various community and business roles in our community, I have worked in partnership with the HCVB and frequently use their services and expert knowledge of the staff to help better market Humboldt Tourism to visitors.

HVCB provides:

- Tourism information collection.
- Disseminating data from local, state, and federal sources.
- Coordinating efforts by the various entities that affect tourism in Humboldt and the surrounding Counties.

Our visitor publications 101 Things to Do are headquarters in Eureka and have magazines in Humboldt, Del Norte, Mendocino, Sonoma, and Oregon, Curry, Josephine, and Jackson counties.

Because we are involved so closely with the visitor industry, I can attest to how vital HVCB is and its role in promoting our community.

The Humboldt County Visitor Bureau is well-positioned with marketing assets, excellent staff, and the drive to expertly do what they do best: represent Humboldt County in the best possible light on the world stage.

With the funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the HCVB will be able to deliver more tourist dollars, filling the county coffers tenfold and returning their investment through additional TOT and sales tax revenue.

Sincerely,

Gregg Gardiner
President & Publisher
101 Things to Do
2383 Myrtle Ave.
Eureka, CA 95501
707-443-1234 extension 309
707-834-9595 cell



Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors,

I am the Managing Partner of the **Best Western Plus Humboldt Bay Inn** located in **Eureka** and a life-long resident of Humboldt County. I am writing this brief letter to share my support for the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau's (HCVB) one time appropriation request of \$600K from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Now that our state and economy are starting to re-open, advertising and marketing for Humboldt County tourism will be paramount in our recovery as we will be competing with many destinations in trying to entice and convince visitors to come to Humboldt!

As you may already know, for every visitor(s) that comes to Humboldt and stays the night, the benefit to all of us is ten-fold. That visitor(s) will not only stay the night, but while here, that person(s) will most likely have at least 2-3 meals in our restaurants, go shopping in our retail or convenient stores, buy gas, visit attractions, etc, etc (nearly \$500M in travel related spending here in 2019). Not only does this help locally owned businesses, employees, and residents, but it also creates a very healthy tax base for the County (nearly \$43M in 2019). This tax revenue is then re-invested into Humboldt which helps make our area a better place to live, work, and play for not only our residents, but also for the visitor experience while here.

With the recent changes that the HCVB has implemented and with its new robust marketing and advertising plan which is more inclusive than in years past, I fully support the request for the one-time \$600K that the Bureau is hoping to obtain from the ARPA. This is one investment that will truly be a benefit for everyone involved from citizens to businesses to the County of Humboldt.

Thank you for your consideration...I appreciate everything that you do for Humboldt and the time you all put in in the decision making process to help make our County an awesome place to live and visit!

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Ambrosini

Managing Partner

BEST WESTERN PLUS Humboldt Bay Inn

Eureka, CA

707-443-2234

HumboldtBayInn.com



EUREKA MAIN STREET

525 Second Street, #105, Eureka CA 95501 | 707.442.9054 | eurekamainstreet.org

June 14, 2021

Dear Humboldt Board of Supervisors;

I am writing this letter in support of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau one time request for \$600,000 from the ARPA funds. I have been the Executive Director of the Fortuna Business Improvement District (1992-1995), and currently serve as the Executive Director of Eureka Main Street (1996-2021). In addition I served on the HCVB Board from 1992-1998.

The Bureau serves a much needed role marketing Humboldt, and the communities within the County. They host travels writers, and companies interested in learning a more in-depth style of living up here among the majestic redwoods, 6 incredible rivers, and the great Pacific Ocean.

This money will help the Bureau continue to successfully market our world up here. It is important now, more than ever, to have a knowledgeable staff who can provide the valuable information they have spent years developing. Many people are just now getting the chance to begin traveling following the last 16+ months of Covid shut downs.

We love our local market, and are getting wonderful support promoting Shop Local. However, we all know that visitors are equally important to the success of our area. The Bureau has been working on attracting visitors for well over 30 years.

It would be prudent to embrace their successful efforts. Please consider their request as they have the track record, the knowledge, and the passion for all things Humboldt.

Very sincerely,

Charlotte McDonald
Executive Director



Dear Board of Supervisors,

I hope to get your support for a one time ask of 600k from the ARPA funds for the Humboldt County Visitor Bureau.

I own a local retail store in Eureka (Pacific Outfitters), a local adventure company that offers tours, guided trips, and classes for our locals & visitors (Pacific Outfitters Adventures), and lastly I founded a non-profit that cleans up our community on a weekly basis (PacOut Green Team).

I currently have 38 employees that I am responsible for. Before COVID we had just over 50 employees. Their success is my success.

Being in Humboldt County and located on 101 North, our customers are broken down into two groups: LOCALS and VISITORS.

Our local market is around 130k. Out of that we serve roughly 40k of that population, based off membership tracking. Out of that 40k roughly 2/3's are regular customers and 1/3 are new customers.

Pre-COVID our visitor market is around 200k people per year. Out of that 200k/year roughly 95% of them have never been here before and they were spending roughly \$483 million a year in Humboldt.

We love our LOCAL market. We cannot survive without them, but we also cannot survive without our VISITOR market as well.

Every year 200k **new** VISITORS come to Humboldt wanting/needing to spend money (\$483 million) in business such as mine. They are coming up here for an adventure and with our adventure gear, clothing & footwear which makes us a very popular place to stop and gear up. We also help 1000's of people, almost daily in the off season and several times a day in the Summer and Fall months with directions to where to go and what to see here in Humboldt. We also give lots of recommendations to lodging, camping, and restaurants.

When you look at the revenue Visitors bring into Humboldt County (\$483 million) and compare it to some of our surrounding counties Shasta (\$544 Million) and Mendocino (\$484 Million) it looks like we are being competitive with our surrounding counties. However, when you see what each of us are spending to get these people here, it tells a different story.

Humboldt - \$390k
Shasta - \$1,495,000
Mendocino - \$1,484,000

Humboldt is budgeting .0008% of our visitor revenue on marketing.
Shasta is budgeting .002% of their visitor revenue on marketing.
Mendocino is budgeting .003% of their visitor revenue on marketing.

I look at this data and see two things. First, we are getting a GREAT return on investment though Humboldt County Visitor Bureau. Second, this shows how popular we are with the rest of the world, and we are leaving money, opportunity, and growth on the table by not expanding our marketing opportunities and budget like our surrounding counties.

Think about what our visitor population and revenue would look like if we had a similar marketing budget as our surrounding counties. We are competing with them with less than 1/3 of their marketing budget. I don't see it as us competing with them but see it as we are letting them compete with us. We should be absolutely dominating our surrounding counties with everything we have to offer and our current success with such little budgeted on marketing.

If we increased our budget to the level of our surrounding counties, I feel we can increase our visitor spending from \$483 million to \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion in a few years based on our current marketing dollars vs revenue dollars generated.

This makes it the BEST investment for our county.

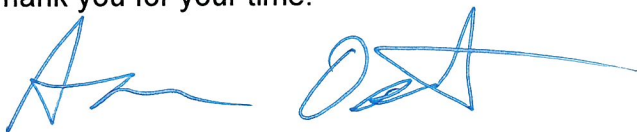
With a similar budget to our surrounding counties, we can come close to hitting Sonoma County visitor numbers in a few years while spending a fraction of what Sonoma County spends on marketing.

Sonoma County's Visitor Revenue is 2.2 billion, however their budget is 2.1 million.

This is an easy and safe investment for our county with one of the best returns on investment. We need this right now. Please make this investment for our county.

Please support Humboldt County and by granting this one-time 600k from the ARPA funds to the Humboldt County Visitor Bureau.

Thank you for your time.



Aaron Ostrom

Pacific Outfitters – Owner

Pacific Outfitters Adventures – Founder/Owner

PacOut Green Team – Founder/Treasurer

The Visitor's Bureau is a Goose!
(...that Lays Golden Eggs)

June 14, 2021

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Supervisors,

Over the past four decades, the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau has helped nurture one of the counties only consistent economic bright stars. Tourism.

The original funding formula consisted of the cities and the county. For various short-sighted reasons, the cities have chosen to quit funding region wide tourism.

Until we can convince the cities that region wide marketing is essential, we only have the County of Humboldt to fund region wide marketing of our tourism assets.

The irony is, the more we market our region, the more visitors we have, and that allows us to collect more TOT that goes to government entities that choose not to fund us.

Board of Supervisors, please don't kill the Goose that lays Golden Eggs!

Sincerely,

Marc Rowley

Coho Cottages and China Creek Cottages
Willow Creek

LATITUDE 40

A California Corporation
P O Box 96 (400 Ocean Avenue)
Ferndale, California 95536

Victorian Inn **Redwood Suites** **Silva's Fine Jewelry**
Phone (707)786-4949 Phone (707) 786-5000 Phone (707) 786-4425
Innkeeper@AVictorianInn.com Innkeeper@RedwoodSuites.com Gems@SilvasJewelry.com

June 12, 2021

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 5th St
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing as the owner and operator of several businesses in Humboldt County (Victorian Inn, Redwood Suites, VI Restaurant, Silva's Jewelry, as well as commercial rental property) to request that you approve of the requested funding for the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau.

You are to be sincerely thanked for your stewardship, wisdom and continuing support of the past and current efforts of the Visitor's Bureau to continue bringing visitors, new residents and businesses to our county. You have, over decades, seen the advantages of supporting the Humboldt County Visitor's Bureau in its outreach, increasing visitors and their financial impact to our area, and have seen, year after year, that it has been successful in doing so.

Of course, included on the long list of your responsibilities is the very important one of financial oversight. Your support of the CVB in the past has proved to have a very high return on investment, one which many investors and business people would love to have...which is one reason why, of course, that the Board of Supervisors has seen fit to continue to fund this work.

Currently there are many groups or associations that have strong interests in bringing visitors to our county, and not all of them are tied to lodging or dining. The CVB is poised, with the granting of their requested one time request of \$600,000, to act as a catalyst for any and all interested local marketing groups to help our collective message go out as one voice, and to be inclusive of all interests, not only lodging. The Humboldt County Visitor's Bureau has, and will continue, to promote the entire county, not just particular segments of it. In these times I believe this overall community approach is

what is needed, and we should keep in mind that, as has been said and repeated many times, “A rising tide lifts all boats”.

The Visitor’s Bureau has a long history of achievement in these areas, and has accomplished this with very limited funding. As one example out of many, its web site attracts in excess of 1.2 million unique information requests annually from out of county, state and national visitors, and it responds to these requests in many different ways. Today, technology has advanced to the point where we can absolutely know where our business is coming from, and I can personally affirm that inquiries coming directly through the CVB website to the websites for my Inns is the second highest in number of people logging in seeking accommodations, according to google analytics. Each and every one of these requests for information is responded to and invited to come visit Humboldt...all of Humboldt, and this is all due to the work of the Humboldt County Visitor’s Bureau.

Thank you very sincerely, regardless of what your final decision may be.

Lowell Daniels
Victorian Inn (www.VictorianVillageInn.com)
Redwood Suites (www.RedwoodSuites.com)
VI Restaurant (www.VIRestaurant.com)
Silva’s Jewelry (www.SilvasJewelry.com)
Email Innkeeper@VictorianVillageInn.com
Phone 707-786-4425



June 14, 2021

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Honorable Supervisors:

I am writing to you today in multiple capacities: Ink People Center for the Arts Executive Director and Co-founder, Chair of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau, Chair of Access Humboldt, and Board Member of the Humboldt County Workforce Development Board, Dell'Arte International, and the Humboldt Creative Alliance.

My purpose is to urge you to grant the request of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau to receive a one time \$600,000 allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act. These funds will be employed solely to market the whole county to the rest of the world in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

I don't need to tell you how the pandemic has impacted tourism, businesses, and our workforce. But did you know that 100% of Humboldt's arts and cultural organizations cancelled events? Our performing arts community (theater, music, dance, opera, spoken word, poetry jams, etc.) was devastated. Many lost over 90% of their income. Many artists and performers taught classes as a way to even out their income - these were all cancelled, though some came back via Zoom.

Did you know that in addition to cannabis and redwoods that Humboldt is renowned nationally for its arts community? Those three things are what inexorably draws people to Humboldt, either to visit or to live. We must get the word out that all three are still here and thriving. Tourists will help our arts and cultural communities recover, and arts and culture will help our community heal.

This \$600,000 will be one of the best investments you will make to bring back economic prosperity and support the resiliency of the Humboldt people.

Sincerely yours,

Libby Maynard
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Humboldt County Board Of Supervisors
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

June 12, 2021

Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing this letter in support of securing \$600K, one-time federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau to implement county marketing initiatives for fiscal year 21/22.

My name is Alegria Sita. I am Owner/Operator of Gala Events and Weddings, a local event planning and officiating company located in Eureka which has been in business for 10 years. We employ 10 seasonal, part-time employees who delight in providing stellar event and hospitality services to our local and destination clients.

Upon opening Gala Events and Weddings, I was unaware of how many destination clients we would be servicing. I quickly discovered that Humboldt County boasts a dreamy backdrop for couples from all over the world who wish to say their, "I Do's" under the towering cathedrals of our majestic redwoods, or along our remote and secluded pacific beaches. Be they private elopements, or extravagant events with large guest lists, Humboldt County draws visitors for events year-round, placing heads in beds and supporting our small business community.

As a local business that has been featured on visitredwoods.com for over 10 years, I am consistently connected to out-of-area customers in search of support with event production or officiant services. Of all marketing efforts employed by my business, I've observed the greatest return on investment from partnering with the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau.

The hospitality industry was unequivocally hit the hardest by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the events industry the first to shut down and the last to reopen. Drawing visitors from out-of-area is imperative to the economic recovery of our businesses and post-pandemic success as we move forward from an entire fiscal year lost.

I urge you to please consider prioritizing funding of the marketing efforts of the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau with the ARPA funds requested. These funds will undoubtedly support Humboldt County small businesses in both economic recovery and growth as we move forward from the devastation that was 2020.

Sincerely,

Alegria Sita
Owner/Operator



Kinesiology and Recreation Administration

June 9, 2021

Board of Supervisors
Humboldt County
825 5th St, Eureka, CA 95501

Re: Humboldt County Visitors Bureau AMRP appropriation request

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I write to share my support for Humboldt County Visitors Bureau's (HCVB) appropriation request from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). I am a professor of tourism management and a tourism researcher at Humboldt State University as well as a member of the HCVB board of directors since January 2021.

This one-time request of \$600,000 will be used expressly for county marketing initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year 2021 – 2022. These funds are imperative for the Bureau to grow and support the county at this critical point in time. Pre-Covid the Bureau had much success marketing Humboldt outside the county and attracting visitors to the area. 2020 saw a tremendous decrease in travel related expenses including in accommodations, arts and culture, and retail sales. It is predicted to take at least 5 years before tourism can recover to 2019 levels. Considering the positive economic impact visitor spending has had on large and small businesses throughout the county, I believe tourism and the Bureau will be key to the economic recovery of Humboldt County post Covid-19. In fact, many other counties and states have come to the same conclusion and have already chosen to disperse federal funding to increase the efforts of their destination marketing and management organizations.

I understand that of the ARPA funds the county received, the Board of Supervisors has designated \$7.89 million for economic development considered vital for the success of small businesses and non-profits. That is the Bureau. The requested funding supports the marketing and growth goals of the Bureau, the Bureau in turn can ensure Humboldt is the top rural tourism destination in Northern California. Tourism has greater economic impact beyond the businesses we think of as typical tourism businesses such as accommodations or attractions. \$1 spent by a traveler has the potential to be spent and re-spent by residents throughout the county on for example pet food, haircuts, groceries and everything in between at our local businesses. Supporting the Bureau in their increased marketing efforts also assists in the county's goals to stimulate local livelihoods and create prosperity for residents.



Not only is tourism a means for economic development it also contributes to improving the quality of life of residents and building better communities. The Bureau has astutely appreciated that tourism goes beyond promoting a place and should be helping to build a better place for the people that live there. By aligning tourism in the county with economic and community development, the Bureau ensures it tells an authentic, inclusive and respectful story about Humboldt County and our communities that resonates with visitors and ultimately results in positive visitor sentiment about Humboldt County. Simply put, they will come back, they will spend money, they will tell their friends and so on.

We must work together for the tourism industry to succeed in Humboldt County. The Bureau has taken steps to partner with the Chambers and developed new collaborations with stakeholders throughout the county. This along with a wealth of diverse experience on the new HCVB Board, we are primed to reach and partner with many different entities to ensure the success of these increased efforts. With this funding the Bureau will be uniquely poised to support tourism as a critical economic driver for Humboldt county and ensure the success of our county and our communities.

Sincerely,

Ara Pachmayer, PhD
Assistant Professor, Kinesiology and Recreation Administration