BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
825 5TH STREET, ROOM 111
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501 PHONE: (707) 476-2390

May 6, 2025

RE: Oppose the Release of Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) Richard Stobaugh

To Whom It May Concern,

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors writes to express our firm and unified opposition to the proposed conditional release and placement of Richard Stobaugh, a convicted sexually violent predator (SVP), in the community of Manila, Humboldt County.

Mr. Stobaugh has an extensive and violent criminal history that includes multiple rapes, sexual assaults at knifepoint and gunpoint, and an attempted kidnapping. The nature and pattern of these offenses—spanning from the early 1980s through the late 1980s—demonstrate a sustained and severe threat to public safety. Medical evaluations have diagnosed Mr. Stobaugh as a sexual sadist, further underscoring the serious risk he poses.

While we recognize the goals of the State's Conditional Release Program (CONREP), it is critical to weigh those intentions against the legitimate safety concerns of the community into which an SVP may be released. The CONREP program's own records indicate that approximately 32% of participants have had their conditional releases revoked for reasons related to community safety. That is a deeply troubling statistic.

The Board shares the concerns voiced by the Humboldt County Sheriff and District Attorney, both of whom have strongly objected to this placement. We find it unacceptable that, despite these objections, the court has approved the relocation of Mr. Stobaugh into a residential neighborhood. The selected location in Manila is particularly concerning due to its small size, limited resources, and proximity to vulnerable populations.

We stand with our constituents who have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities. This is not a partisan issue—it is a matter of public trust, safety, and the well-being of our residents. We respectfully urge the California Department of State Hospitals and the Humboldt County Superior Court to reconsider this decision and explore alternative options that do not place our community at risk.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bushnell,
Chair, Humboldt County Board of Supervisors