

REGIONAL CENTER
OF ORANGE COUNTY

January 21, 2014

Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Chair, Senate Rules Committee
State Capitol, Room 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Appointment of Santi J. Rogers
Director, California Department of Developmental Services**

Dear Senator Steinberg:

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) provides services and coordinates community supports for over 17,000 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Orange County. *We are writing to you in strong support of Governor Edmund J. Brown's appointment of Santi J. Rogers as the Director of the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS).*

RCOC confidently supports Governor Brown's appointment of Mr. Rogers as the best and strongest choice as Director of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Mr. Rogers has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to ensuring quality lives for Californians with developmental disabilities in a career that has spanned over forty years. Experience with various levels of a complex service delivery system have afforded him the perspective and knowledge necessary for leadership during this time of transition. The unique combination of positions he has held in our system throughout the years makes him an ideal leader; recognized by many, respected by all. The historical framework, familiarity with the various programs, services and support options available to children and adults with developmental disabilities gained by Mr. Rogers, are an asset to a system that, over time, has lost much of its valuable institutional knowledge.

From the developmental centers to the regional centers, Mr. Rogers has managed and overseen different branches of the developmental services system. This appointment would be a return to the Department for Mr. Rogers. From 1983 to 1987, he served as a Deputy Director in the DDS where he oversaw community services; a division that included regional centers, as well as community-based program providers.

During his years as director of Stockton State Hospital (1976-1983), Porterville Developmental Center (1987-1994), and Agnews Developmental Center (1992-93), he personally administered the depopulation of state facilities and helped hundreds of people served with successful transitions into their communities. Mr. Rogers also demonstrated this strength more recently during closure of the Agnews Developmental Center; which was the first closure of a state institution where former residents were not transferred to another institution.

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Serving as Executive Director of San Andreas Regional Center during the closure of Agnews, Mr. Rogers worked with the DDS Closure Team and neighboring regional centers to secure resources, and ensure that former residents of Agnews were safe and satisfied in their new homes. He worked tirelessly with parents and families until all of their questions were answered, and they were comfortable with the new placements for their loved ones. Mr. Rogers has garnered the affection, attention, and respect from many of those he worked with during the Agnews closure, including but not limited to the DDS, legislators and their staff, regional centers, stakeholders, family members, and providers.

In his current role as Executive Director of San Andreas Regional Center (1995), Mr. Rogers provides daily management of a staff who cares for the lives of over 16,000 people with developmental disabilities in Monterey, Santa Clara, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties.

In his local community and beyond, Mr. Rogers is affectionately recognized in the developmental services community and some of the Legislature as the "Keeper of the Lanterman Act." While roaming the halls of the State Capital, he has been known to pull the latest update of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act from his briefcase and remind people of the rights, protections, and promises contained within its statutes. He has been serving and continues to serve, as a staunch defender of the Lanterman Act, attending almost every gathering where people with developmental disabilities are present, both in the State Capitol and in his catchment area.

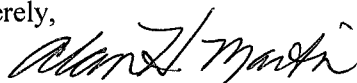
As a person who has invested decades of his own life to the lives of countless individuals with developmental disabilities, Mr. Rogers possesses not only the skill and capability to lead the DDS; he also possesses a heart and soul for the work that is done with, through and by this Department. He handles situations with efficiency, thoughtfulness and kindness.

RCOC fully recognizes the difficult road ahead for the State of California, the Health and Human Services Agency, and the Department of Developmental Services, with the increasing need for services and the statutory limitations that affect availability of funds. In times when a steady hand and a sharp mind are required for difficult decisions, RCOC believes Santi J. Rogers will provide the State of California with the highest level of service he has to offer.

RCOC strongly urges you and the Senate Rules Committee to confirm Governor Brown's appointment of Santi J. Rogers as Director to the Department of Developmental Services.

If you have any questions regarding our unequivocal support for this appointment, please do not hesitate to contact me, or our RCOC Executive Director Larry Landauer at (714) 796-5206.

Sincerely,



Alan Martin, Esq.
Chair, Regional Center of Orange County Board of Directors

cc: Governor Edmund J. Brown
Senator Jean Fuller, Vice-Chair, Senate Rules Committee
Members, Senate Rules Committee
Members, Orange County Legislative Delegation
Diane Van Maren, Office of Senate Pro Tempore