April 26, 2019

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez  
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 143: Shelter Crisis: Homeless Shelters: County of Orange – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Gonzalez:

On behalf of the California Travel Association, also known as CalTravel, I am writing to support AB 143, which would allow the County of Orange, or any city located within the county, the County of Alameda, and the City of San Jose to authorize emergency housing to include emergency shelter, upon the declaration of a shelter crisis.

CalTravel is the umbrella trade association representing the travel, tourism, and hospitality industry. Visitors to California spent $132 billion in 2017, spending that supported over one million jobs. California travelers generated $10.3 billion in state and local taxes in 2017 to support vital public services including police, fire protection, health and homeless services, park maintenance, education and road repair. Our membership is made up of cities, destinations, resorts, amusement parks, sports venues, transportation companies, industry associations, ad agencies, media companies, and other organizations for whom travel and tourism is important.

Our members take extraordinary pride in promoting the California experience to visitors from around the world. They have also seen the effect of homelessness within their own communities that impacts those experiencing homelessness, visitors, residents, and workers. It is one of the top challenges facing the travel and tourism industry in California today. We agree that it is important in areas that are experiencing a shelter crisis to require the city or county to develop a described shelter plan, including expanding the exemption of CEQA when necessary and appropriate, and follow up with an annual report in order to urgently address the crisis of homelessness in those communities.

For these reasons we urge your support for AB 143.

Sincerely,

Barbara Newton  
President & CEO  
California Travel Association

Cc:  
The Honorable Sharon Quirk-Silva, Author  
The Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Jennifer Swenson, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
William Weber, Republican Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee