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State of Arizona
House of Representatives

November 30th, 2020

Ramón Valadez, Chairman of the Pima County Board of Supervisors
130 W. Congress St., 11th Floor
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Dear Chairman Valadez & Members of the Board of Supervisors:

I submit this letter in support of the December 1st, 2020 Agenda Item #9, *Resolution No. 2020-92*, declaring racial and ethnic health inequities and income inequality in Pima County to be a public health crisis.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I am often reminded of the challenges that my constituents are faced with on a day-to-day basis—but the reality is that the cards were stacked against them *long* before this virus shook our world. For instance, prior to the pandemic: Pima County had a record-breaking average of 30 evictions per day, 1 in 5 children faced food insecurity, and my legislative district was the 4th most economically-depressed district statewide with 40,178 constituents living in poverty, according to a 2018 report from the Arizona Department of Economic Security.

Today, my constituents are facing the very worst of a global crisis that has cost them their homes, jobs, and dignity. It didn't have to be this way. For too long, our region's policy makers inadequately challenged the status quo. We covered our ears when we heard that our neighbors were one, two, or three paychecks away from losing everything.

It is time to stop putting Band-Aids on the systemic barriers that keep our communities of color disenfranchised, and I believe the County is in a unique position to lead on this important issue given its early work to combat poverty.

Whether the policy priority will be providing more affordable housing, expanding health care, increasing access to transportation, ensuring a cradle-to-career pipeline, or fostering good-paying jobs with benefits, this work will take time and lots of deep community reflection.

Our focus must be clear: let us no longer look the other way when a person's zip code, race, ethnicity, income, access to health care, educational attainment, sexual orientation or gender identity determines their ability to thrive and prosper.

I commend your due diligence, and I look forward to working with you in the years ahead to get our state agencies on track as well.

Sincerely,

Andrés Cano, Arizona State Representative

C: Members of the Pima County Board of Supervisors
Chuck Huckelberry, Pima County Administrator