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TWENTY-THIRD SENATE DISTRICT



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August 11, 2026

The Honorable Nathan J. Hochman
District Attorney
County of Los Angeles
211 West Temple Street, Suite 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Opposition to Proposed Lancaster Placement of Sexually Violent Predator Harold Wachter

Dear District Attorney Hochman:

We write on behalf of the Antelope Valley communities we represent to express our strong opposition to the California Department of State Hospitals' proposed placement of sexually violent predator Harold Wachter at 45310 200th Street East in Lancaster.

According to your office, Mr. Wachter has a history of sexual crimes against children and several Los Angeles County convictions for sexually violent criminal offenses. On April 20, 2023, the Los Angeles County Superior Court found him suitable for conditional release and ordered the Department of State Hospitals (DSH) to locate housing in Los Angeles County. DSH has now selected Lancaster for his proposed placement.

We recognize that the court has already made a determination regarding Mr. Wachter's suitability for conditional release. The question now before the court is where that release should occur. On that question, we believe the concerns of the Antelope Valley and the people who live near the proposed placement deserve significant weight.

For too long, residents of the Antelope Valley have felt that decisions carrying serious consequences for their communities are made elsewhere and imposed upon them after the fact. The High Desert should not be treated as a convenient destination for placements that state agencies would struggle to make in other Los Angeles County communities.

Our constituents deserve more than notification after a location has been selected. They deserve transparency regarding the factors DSH considered, the potential risks associated with the placement, the safeguards that would be required, and why this particular location was determined to be appropriate.

Public safety must remain the first consideration.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that your office vigorously represent the concerns of Lancaster and Antelope Valley residents before the court and oppose approval of the proposed 200th Street East placement.

We further ask your office to make every legally available record concerning Mr. Wachter's criminal history and the proposed placement readily accessible to the public before the August 26 public-comment deadline. Residents being asked to comment on a decision of this magnitude should have access to sufficient information to make an informed judgment.

We appreciate that your office has provided a mechanism for public comments and encourage you to ensure that the concerns submitted by Antelope Valley residents are fully presented to the court before the September 10 placement hearing.

The Antelope Valley is home to families, children, schools, businesses, and neighborhoods whose safety matters every bit as much as those in any other part of Los Angeles County. Our constituents deserve to be heard, and we stand with them in opposing this proposed placement.

Sincerely,



Suzette Martinez Valladares
Senator, 23rd District



Tom Lackey
Assemblymember, 34th District