



COMMITTEE FOR
GREEN FOOTHILLS

January 23, 2016

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for California Coastal Program Executive Director Dr. Charles Lester

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of Committee for Green Foothills, a regional conservation organization in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, I write in strong support of the continuation of Dr. Charles Lester as the California Coastal Commission's Executive Director.

Over the past 40 years, the people of California have overwhelmingly supported protecting our irreplaceable coastline and providing access for all. Under Dr. Lester's leadership, the Coastal Commission has made great strides in addressing a backlog of violations, completing a long-awaited guidance document for local governments to plan for sea level rise, and partnering with local governments to update many Local Coastal Plans, thanks to new administrative penalty authority and increased budget.

CGF has been deeply concerned by reports that the most pro-development Commissioners, including your appointees, are attempting a coup to weaken the Commission's strong mandate to protect the coast. Development pressures today are greater than ever, and will undoubtedly increase as our state continues to grow.

There is no justification whatsoever to terminate Dr. Lester. The integrity of the Commission and its mission are at stake; the independence and professionalism of the staff are essential to its integrity. Commission Chair Mary Shallenberger stated in 2011 when the Commission unanimously voted to appoint Dr. Lester to the Executive Director position, "***The entire Commission recognized and appreciates the unique experience, unwavering integrity, and clear vision Dr. Lester brings to this position.***"

CGF heartily agrees. We appreciate your leadership on climate change and your early support of the California Coastal Act during your first term as Governor.

Please support the continuation of Dr. Lester as Executive Director.

Sincerely,

Lennie Roberts, Legislative Advocate