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SDTEF Analyzes Local Funding for Contracted Homelessness Services and Issues PROS Board Evaluation Standards in Homelessness Services

San Diego, CA (July 14, 2023) – Over the past twelve months, the San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation (SDTEF) has extensively reviewed contracts issued by the county and the various cities within the county to organizations providing homelessness services. According to our review, local agencies alone have been awarded over \$90 million toward homelessness services since 2015. This figure does not account for philanthropic or direct investments in San Diego County by either the federal or state governments.

While spending on homelessness has increased dramatically in recent years, taxpayers have not seen the commensurate decrease in homelessness numbers that many expected. Homelessness continues to be an extremely visible public health and public safety issue for San Diego County residents.

“People in the community ask me what is happening with our dollars in homelessness services,” said Haney Hong, president and CEO of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association.

“Wouldn’t it be great if we could match the dollars to actual outcomes and see what’s working? That’s exactly what we want to do, and that analysis would help us address homelessness in a more effective manner by targeting public and philanthropic investment where it matters most.”

It is difficult for taxpayers to fully support public spending without understanding the specific service outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. To conduct an analysis tying spending to outcomes would require data housed within the Homeless Management Information System managed by the Regional Task Force on Homelessness.

SDTEF has been working to collect these anonymized data on client outcomes in order to analyze service effectiveness and cost efficacy. This future analysis will help public funders to identify strong performers in homelessness services and allow policy makers and staffs to maximize the outcomes of public investments and to more efficiently and effectively address homelessness.

In addition to the review of homeless service contracts, SDTEF’s Public Regional Outcomes Standards Board (PROS Board) has approved two new measurement and reporting standards to enhance trust in performance reporting in homelessness services. The PROS Board standard on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will increase transparency around demographic disparities in client outcomes. The new PROS Board standard on rapid exits and diversion will promote transparency around efforts to help clients resolve their homelessness through their own



networks, rather than costly housing programs. There is currently no systematic collection of successful rapid exit and diversionary activities.

The PROS Board has also exposed for public comment a standard on measuring and reporting clients' stability in housing, which will increase transparency around efforts to keep people permanently housed. The public comment period for this [draft](#) ends on July 27, 2023.

The PROS Board remains committed to transparency and accountability in homelessness services. We aim to bring together stakeholders to develop regionally standardized reporting and evaluation principles.

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The San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation supports the San Diego County Taxpayers Association and the general taxpaying public with in-depth research and educational programming for community leaders and civil servants. The Foundation convenes the regional community of public policy practitioners, educators, and artists who want to study issues objectively and to facilitate civility and citizenship in public policy discussions. The Foundation also administers the new Public Regional Outcomes Standards Board (PROS Board), which sets regionally accepted principles in evaluating and reporting public good outcomes.