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April 30, 2021

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
California State Assembly  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
California State Senate  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: 2021-22 Budget Request – Marin Community College District's Science Field Station**

Dear Chairs Ting and Skinner:

I am writing to respectfully request that the 2021-22 Budget Act include a one-time appropriation of \$2,600,000 (two million six hundred thousand dollars) to support the Marin Community College District's Science Field Station in my district.

The Field Station will be a one-of-its-kind facility for a community college district in California. This exciting state-of-the-art project designed by Perkins Eastman Dougherty Architects will include indoor and outdoor instructional areas on edge of the Bolinas Lagoon. The Field Station has been planned for versatility in its potential uses. The laboratory and lecture spaces are designed for education and faculty-directed student research in all of the life and earth sciences with emphasis on marine-related areas of study. Sea water tanks and exploration tables are also planned. The Field Station will also include office space and areas for storing specimens. The existing, dock and boat launch, owned by the Marin Community College District (MCCD) and directly across the street from the Field Station, will continue to be a critical part of the facility.

The Field Station will support the MCCD's mission of delivering educational excellence rooted in providing equitable opportunities and fostering success for all of the diverse members of the Bay Area community and, indeed, for any Californian choosing a community college as a route to possible further education or employment-skills development.

The new Field Station will be used to prepare students who are considering, or have chosen, the sciences as their focus for transfer to four-year colleges and universities by providing the opportunity to do field work in the unique seasonal estuary of Bolinas Lagoon and the nearby Duxbury Reef. Many former MCCD students who went on to obtain post-graduate degrees in the sciences have cited their experience at the Field Station as

seminal to triggering their interest in the sciences and motivating them to its further study. The new Field Station will continue that tradition.

The new Field Station will have impacts that will be directly felt on a spectrum of students broader than the immediate MCCD community. In the past, the MCCD has allowed primary and secondary school groups utilize the Field Station. That tradition will continue. The new Field Station's design incorporates features, such as outdoor laboratory tables and tanks, that will allow school groups to use the Field Station even when College of Marin faculty are not present. In order to inspire the genesis of a new generation of teachers and scientists from more diverse backgrounds, the District plans to collaborate in the use of the Field Station with organizations and secondary school teachers that seek to bring equity to historically underserved populations by making the exploration of science more available through hands-on programs for children and young adults.

The Field Station is sited on the edge of two significant and major ecological areas, across the street from the Bolinas Lagoon and 1 mile from Duxbury Reef. Bolinas Lagoon is on the Ramsar Convention's List of Wetlands of International Importance; one of only seven North America marine estuaries designated as such. Duxbury Reef is the largest intertidal reef in the Western United States and the largest intertidal shale reef in North America. The reef's substrata and broad intertidal plane are major factors in making this geological formation, located in the Gulf of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary, an intertidal area of significant biodiversity. Located where it is planned, within a community college's program, the planned new Field Station will be uniquely situated to provide accessibility in the broadest sense – accessibility to critical environments for study, and accessibility to a broad spectrum of Californians who, but for a Field Station operated in the community college system, would not have the opportunity to experience hands-on science.

The new Field Station will facilitate both new studies, as well as the continuation of prior long-term studies, of the Bolinas Lagoon and Duxbury Reef, key to understanding human impacts on those critical environments and for presenting fact-based prescriptions for these and similar marine environments for the future.

The new Field Station will once again offer an innovative learning environment that promotes social and environmental responsibility by enabling the study of our critical marine and terrestrial systems during a time when a fact-based understanding of those systems is critical to the formation of public opinion and the crafting of public policy. The impact that access to such a facility has on deepening the understanding of and care for the stewardship of diverse ecosystems by COM students cannot be overstated, whether or not they choose to continue their education or future work in the sciences.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Levine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARC LEVINE