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Joint Statement From San Diego County Sheriff's Department and San Diego Police Department Regarding Recent Protests

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our region and the nation, we are reminded of the delicate balance between the right to protest and enforcement of public safety laws. The San Diego Police Department and San Diego County Sheriff's Department both recognize these concerns. As we continue to deal with this crisis as a region, it is important to understand we are all in this together.

Over the weekend, protests were held across the county against Governor Newsom's Executive Order and the County's Public Health Order.

On Saturday, a large protest was held in Downtown San Diego in front of Superior Court. Several hundred protestors gathered to voice their frustration, anger and disagreement with the governmental orders. On Sunday, a protest was held in Encinitas protesting the closure of beaches and public spaces.

Saturday's protest happened in San Diego Police Department jurisdiction. Sunday's protest happened in Sheriff's Department jurisdiction. Both law enforcement agencies recognize the public's desire to express their First Amendment rights.

The San Diego Police Department and San Diego County Sheriff's Department recognize this fundamental right while balancing it with the need to enforce the public health orders. Both on Saturday and Sunday, the protests remained peaceful and once people's voices were heard, the protests ended.

Throughout these challenging times, law enforcement's role has been to maintain public safety by ensuring community members are in compliance of the state and county regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Numerous warnings have been given along with citations to those who violated these orders.

Although the protests were allowed to take place, we must not forget the public health orders were put in place to protect our communities from the spread of COVID-19. While no citations were issued at the protests, that does not mean prosecution will not be sought, especially to the organizers of these events.

Although these orders have caused great strain to all of us, they are in place to save lives. The San Diego Police Department and San Diego County Sheriff's Department will continue to enforce the health orders.

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