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Can Orange County Collect 1.5M Diapers in One Day? **Homebuilders Unite to Build 'Diaper Homes' to Support OC Families Experiencing Homelessness**

June 13, 2019 (Irvine, CA) – Elected officials, community partners and Southern California's premier homebuilders will attempt to shatter last year's record of 1.2 million diapers and baby items collected at the upcoming "Builders for Babies" event on Friday, June 21 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. under the Big 'A' at Angels Stadium.

The festive event is the culmination of HomeAid Orange County's month-long *Essentials*® Diaper Drive, a countywide campaign in partnership with First 5 Orange County, to collect critical baby items for families who are experiencing homelessness.

"On average, a family needs 4,320 diapers a year just for one infant which can cost more than \$1,000 annually," said Gina Scott, Interim Executive Director of HomeAid Orange County. "An estimated 120,000 children live in poverty in Orange County, so the Essentials campaign helps fill a tremendous need."

The June 21 event will feature teams of homebuilders and other community partners competing to build the best homes and structures -- made entirely of diapers -- that will be judged by local celebrities and elected officials. Hundreds of volunteers will be onsite to assist in loading UPS trucks and packing pallets of donated items which will benefit 23 shelters for families experiencing homelessness, including Precious Life Shelter (Los Alamitos), Families Forward (Irvine), South County Outreach and HomeAid Family CareCenter (Orange).



"This is all about our community coming together to help families, especially those with young children, who are faced with the unthinkable decision of having to choose between food and diapers," said Essentials Steering Committee Chairman Oliver Jones of UPS, one of the campaign's major corporate sponsors.

Since HomeAid Orange County started the campaign 12 years ago, items collected have grown

from 30,000 to more than 1.2 million items annually in 2018. To date, more than 8.5 million diapers, wipes and food have been distributed to local families in need over the life of the campaign. The Essentials campaign has gone national with the support of HomeAid America, and this year, two other cities -- Salt Lake City, Utah and Denver, CO -- will host their own Builders for Babies events on June 21. The collective goal between the three HomeAid chapters -- to collect 3 million diapers.

All community partners and the public are encouraged to drop off donations between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. The event includes music, food, and booths and is open to the public.

More information about Essentials and how to become a sponsor or donate is available at www.homeaidoc.org/essentials.

About HomeAid Orange County

HomeAid Orange County is the founding chapter of a national non-profit organization with the vision and purpose to end homelessness. Through its mission of building new lives for families and individuals experiencing homelessness through housing and community outreach, HomeAid, develops housing, advocates and provides service in the community to those experiencing homelessness.

Since 1989, HomeAid Orange County -- founded by the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Southern California's Orange County Chapter, has completed 63 developments, adding 1,684 shelter beds throughout Orange County. HomeAid acts as the housing developer and liaison between services providers, community volunteers, builders and specialty contractors. Tragically thousands are still in need of shelter each and every day. To help solve this social crisis, new housing developments are being planned and constructed throughout Orange County. For more information, please visit www.homeaidoc.org.

About First 5 Orange County, Children and Families Commission

First 5 Orange County, Children and Families Commission oversees the allocation of funds from Proposition 10, which added a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California. In fiscal year 2017/18, the Commission allocated more than \$31 million to fund programs for young children. Children ages 0 to 5 years and their families received 2.8 million services. Funds help pay for early education, pediatric primary and specialty health care, children's dental care, homeless prevention, and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age 5 and their families. First 5 Orange County's vision is that all children are healthy and ready to learn. For more information, visit www.occhildrenandfamilies.com.

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