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Immediate Release

Santa Clara County Supervisor, Dom Cortese, has presented a unique and innovative solution to two problems facing Santa Clara County: efficient agricultural production and growing energy demands of a large fleet of county buses and vehicles. His proposal, the local production and use of gasahol.

The problem of overproduction of crops, the search for crops less vulnerable to the Mediterranean fruit fly, and the productive use of agricultural land, prompted the proposal, according to Cortese.

A feasibility study is necessary to provide answers to the many questions that will need to be addressed before such a plan can be put into action, states Cortese. There are, however, many things that are already known which indicate this would be a good solution to both these problems. In order to effectively produce gasahol, comments Cortese, the four major elements of gasahol production must be considered. The first, raw material, is no problem in the agricultural areas of South County. The over-production of such crops as sugar beets and corn could be easily used for the production of gasahol. Financing, another major element, could be obtained through government guaranteed loans and local private investors.

Santa Clara County and neighboring San Benito County would provide the solution for the third major element, the elimination of the by-product. The pulp could be hauled to nearby feed lots, and used as feed for livestock.

The final component necessary, according to Cortese, is where the second part of his proposal comes into play, a market for the gasahol. According to Cortese, 70% of the gasahol product could be consumed by the County bus and vehicle fleets. It would save the taxpayers money in providing fuel for those vehicles while making excellent use of the county agricultural lands, and providing necessary jobs for South County.

The feasibility study would cost about \$40,000, a figure Cortese feels is a good investment to insure the future of agricultural production in Santa Clara County

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and the production of a renewable energy source.

Cortese, who grew up in the agricultural community of Santa Clara County, is well aware of their needs, and hopes to address them from a state level. He is running for the 24th Assembly District seat which covers the southern end of Santa Clara County and all of San Benito County.