

Ramirez, Angelica

Public Comment

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From: Melissa Smith <melissasmith@ucsb.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 9:14 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Please include this in the record of the BOS meeting June 16th, 2020 regarding Santa Maria health data

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Dear Board of Supervisors,

I would like to highlight the importance of having a deep understanding of the data regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the community in Santa Maria. As a physician who has worked in Santa Maria with indigenous farmworkers, and as the interim coordinator of the Latinx and Indigenous COVID-19 Response Task Force, it is critical to understand how this pandemic impacts communities who are part of the essential workforce, and vulnerable to COVID-19. I also served as Chair of the expert health care panel that created the RISE document to guide reopening efforts in Santa Barbara County. All of these experiences inform my analysis of priorities of our county's public health efforts.

I would like to emphasize three points about the value of the data and how it can inform our collective efforts: 1) The demographics data related to Santa Maria is useful in guiding prevention and intervention strategies to reduce cases, hospitalization, and death; 2) Policymakers and community stakeholders need to convene, reflect and analyze this data to create solutions to mitigate the disproportionate number of cases in Santa Maria; and 3) Uncontrolled cases in Santa Maria may affect reopening efforts. With thanks for your consideration and support of this important work.

Melissa Smith, M.D.

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Melissa Smith, M.D.
Director, Health Equity Initiatives
University of California, Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA, 93106-2150
Email: melissasmith@ucsb.edu

Women's Health, Gender and Empowerment Center of Expertise