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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment, Jail System Housing*

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April 17, 2026

**E. onja Brown Lawson: PUBLIC COMMENTS:
County Board of Supervisors, Budget Hearing on Jail Expansion**

Good morning Supervisors, I have been a member of FamiliesACT, that has served the SB community for the past 20 years.

There is no question that option 1.0 is the best choice!! Not the 1.5 jail expansion.

This is not just a policy decision. It is a moral decision.

A decision about justice. A decision about equity. A decision about who bears the burden of our system.

Our current jail population is already near the capacity of the 1.0 option—and with changes already underway, that number is expected to decrease. So, Why would we spend \$147 million to build beds we do not need?

Especially at a time when this County is cutting public health, cutting social services—cutting the very programs that help stabilize lives and prevent incarceration in the first place. But we must go deeper.

and ask—who is being placed in these beds?

It is disproportionately Black and Brown individuals. It is people struggling with mental illness. It is those who are poor, those who cannot afford bail, those who are caught in a system of delay.

People are sitting in jail not because they are a threat,

but because the system has failed to move them through with fairness and efficiency.

And while they sit there— they lose jobs, they lose housing, families are torn apart, and futures are diminished.

That is the real human cost.

Dr. King reminded us that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

If we expand a system that we already know operates with inequity, then we are not solving the problem—

we are institutionalizing it.

Do we expand inequity? Or do we invest in justice?

Choosing the 1.0 option is a commitment to dignity, and equity.

Be on the side of justice. Choose the 1.0 option.

Increase beds, NOT cells!

Thank you.