

de la Guerra, Sheila

Public Comment



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**From:** Lynne Gibbs <gibbslyn2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 15, 2023 8:32 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Cc:** Williams, Das; Spencer Brandt; Pamela Flynt Tambo; Hanke, Aaron; Nelson, Bob; Lavagnino, Steve; Bantilan, Cory; Hartmann, Joan; Jefferson Litten; Laura Capps; Henson, Chris; Elliott, Darcel  
**Subject:** NAMI/FACT Statement on Jail Remodel  
**Attachments:** Board Letter Jail Facility 2023 05 12.docx

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Good morning,

Please see attached the statement of NAMI Santa Barbara County and Families ACT! to the Board of Supervisors regarding tomorrow's jail remodel agenda item.

Thank you so much,  
Lynne Gibbs

May 13, 2023

Chair Williams and Honorable Supervisors,

NAMI Santa Barbara County and Families ACT! support a minimized renovation plan for the Mail Jail along with the Option One build-out proposal for the North County jail:

*“Direct staff to proceed with obtaining designs for Option 1 (new construction of one pod for a total jail system of 728 beds) and prior to final design, return to the Board with targeted diversion strategies to addresses jail population management, sustainable jail staffing, and identified savings or other revenues to fund the strategies.”*

We hear voiced across the county a strongly renewed determination to reduce the jail population by addressing and correcting the deficit of diversion options for the substantial jail population of those with mental illness. We know what is needed – coordinated, substantive outpatient treatment, such as the evidence-based programs of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), and elimination of the programmatic siloes that leave those with mental illness out in the cold when they fall into the treatment gaps. Our loved ones spend far too many days, months and years incarcerated for lack of community-based treatment. Too often they are arrested for lack of inpatient beds for stabilization; and once arrested they get stuck in the jail for lack of residential treatment options on the outside. Once released from the jail, they cycle back far too often for lack of treatment. We know that every day of untreated psychosis does irreversible damage to the brain making recovery that much more difficult.

We can address this problem working together. We are at an exciting juncture, buoyed by the state’s financial commitment to supporting housing and treatment. We have made a good start with programs such as Co-Response, Holistic Defense, AB 1810, and Pretrial Release. Now we need the treatment programs to better serve those with serious mental illness. We in NAMI and Families Act! look forward to participating in a rejuvenation of the County’s Stepping Up initiative to build upon the excellent programs already put in place.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Please heed the recommendation of counsel in Murray v. County of Santa Barbara case stating that increasing community-based alternatives to incarceration can reduce the jail population thus reducing the costs for jail construction and *achieving compliance with the Stipulated Judgment and resolution of the Murray case.*

Respectfully,

Lynne Gibbs, on behalf of NAMI SBCO and Families ACT!

