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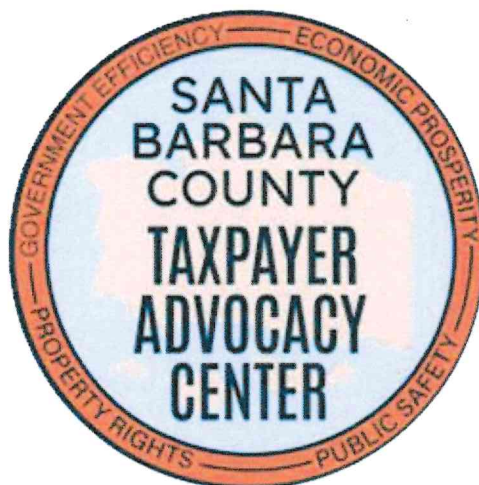
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Katherine Douglas

Public Comment - Public Safety

From: mikestoker@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2026 9:12 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: The SBCTAC OPPOSES the proposed budget cuts to the Sheriff's Department budget...

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"The SBCTAC...Fighting for the Taxpayer and Helping our Businesses Succeed..."

Dear Chairman Nelson & Honorable Board Members,

The SBCTAC, and on behalf of our over 350 members, oppose the proposed budget cut of \$4.9 million to the Sheriff's Office's budget, which will lead to the elimination of 30 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, 11 of which are sworn deputies.

The SBCTAC acknowledges the budget restraints you are working under. However, it comes down to a simple question: What are your priorities?

The SBCTAC believes this board has shown in recent times, by a number of actions, that public safety is no longer the #1 priority of your Board of Supervisors. We have seen over the last 5 years a much more

hostile approach in public forums by your board in your dealings with our elected Sheriff, Bill Brown. And we've seen that when hard decisions have to be made, the commitment to our deputy sheriffs is not what it was in the past. In a recent board hearing, when each of you was asked what your top priority was, only Chairman Nelson said public safety.

Instead, the focus has been on overtime, which suggests the Sheriff may not be properly managing his department. While many board members use the overtime issue to shift the focus away from the Board's lack of support for the Sheriff and the Sheriff's Office. The fact is that there are several independent studies that the board is aware of, all of which concluded that the Sheriff's Office does not have the number of FTEs necessary for the Sheriff's Office to carry out its statutory duties. All these studies concluded that the Sheriff's Office is several dozen FTEs short. There are other factors, some of which are the direct result of actions by this board, that also contribute to the overtime situation. I will discuss this in more detail in the weeks to come in a White Paper that the SBCTAC intends to release on overtime in the Sheriff's Office.

Notwithstanding the real reasons for overtime stated above, the Sheriff's Office is taking the overtime issue as seriously as possible. As you are aware, the Grand Jury recently released a report. In that report, the grand jury did single out for praise new undersheriff Brad Welch and the new chief deputies for all the custody and law enforcement divisions. This new executive team, appointed by Sheriff Brown, conveys "a clear understanding of the need for efficiency and budgetary controls," the grand jury found. "The grand jury recommends that the Sheriff give this new leadership the necessary support to bring the overtime budget issues under control."

Enough of overtime and back to the budget. The SBCTAC urges you to publicly prove that public safety, and in this case, your Sheriff's Office, is your top priority. If it is, you will hold them harmless from budget cuts in these difficult times. If not, cutting 30 positions in the Sheriff's Office will be one more action in sending a message to the public, future potential recruits, and to our existing deputies, that when times are tough, you don't have their back.

To the extent you do move forward with these cuts, the SBCTAC believes the board has one option available that you could pursue that will help you in adopting the balanced budget staff has recommended in the short term, but send a message that the Sheriff's Office is a top priority. You could direct staff that when the unanticipated revenues in property taxes from Sable Offshore, which are not included in this year's revenues due to the board's opposition to Sable, are collected, those revenues will be the first dollars returned to the Sheriff Office's budget to restore funding for the FTEs being eliminated.

I thank you for your time and consideration of this very important issue.

Best regards,
Mike Stoker
President & CEO, SBCTAC