

From: [maureen.earls](#)
To: [sbcob](#)
Subject: Letter to Supervisors for April 1, 2025 Meeting
Date: Friday, March 28, 2025 11:59:59 AM
Attachments: [March 25,2025 Board of Supervisors.docx](#)

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Dear Jacquelyne,
Please forward this letter to the Board of Supervisors.
Thank you,
Maureen Earls

March 25, 2025

Dear Supervisors,

I have just read Mike Wilson's 2025 report to you regarding the jail population projection in preparation for the April 1 Board meeting. I want to share three conclusions that I hope you consider before your vote on the next steps for the jail remodel.

1. Under **Policy Changes P6**, Wilson states:

"The jail projections presented above (by 10 years 800 jail population) assumes that the policy and practice continue as they have for the past three years."

However, you are voting on a major change:

- a. Agenda options: Investing \$100 - 200 million in building jails or
- b. Our community request for a PAUSE to create a Task Force to present a plan to invest those millions in community alternatives for those who don't belong in jail

2. Under **Jail Projections P4**, Wilson outlines what we can do to reduce the projected jail population:

- a. Reduce the number of daily admissions
- b. Reduce the average length of stay in days

With funding we can plan for a variety of Community options to address these reductions. Here are two examples:

- a. The BW grant application 2025 for two Crisis Residential Treatment (CRT) facilities for justice involved alternatives to jail (32 beds and services) is one example of alternative housing and services for reducing jail admissions for people with mental health needs.

- b. READY, the Public Defender Early Representation program, is mentioned in Wilson's report as a potential for an increase to expand its success in reducing days in jail.

3. Under **Jail Projections P4**, Wilson states *"future jail populations are difficult to estimate because many factors can influence the number of people booked into jail"* :

- a. economic conditions and county budgets
- b. local practice changes
- c. values of elected officials

I ask you as Board members to consider these factors, including your values for the good of the county.

Our county has met justice system challenges before. We have evidence we can achieve major justice system reductions. In our meeting with Holly Benton's Team, CLUE learned SB Supervised Juvenile Probation declined by 63% in 5 years. It reduced by over 300 from 557 in 2014 to 247 in 2023. It took vision and leadership. During Covid we also saw a collaborative effort reducing the jail population by over 300 with no spike in crime. With the decision whether to invest \$100 to over \$200 million in jails or a justice system change, with community alternatives, we will now respond again to a critical opportunity.

On April 1st, consider choosing to PAUSE the vote on jail options and form a Task Force to study and plan increased significant county investment in specific alternatives for reducing the jail population. After the Task Force report, you can better decide if our county can, with funding jail reductions, eliminate the need to invest in building a new jail.

Sincerely,
Maureen Earls,
Co- chair CLUE Criminal Justice Workgroup
Independent Comment