

May 20, 2016

Honorable Supervisors:

I am a NAMI member and FamiliesAct member, but here I speak only for myself, as someone interested in treatment of persons with serious mental illness in the jail and upon release, and as someone who serves on the Community Corrections Input Committee, providing some exposure to efforts to improve health care at the jail.

I understand that funding for the new jail facility will be addressed by the Board of Supervisors on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

I understand the antiquated design of the current jail is a considerable impediment to robust mental health programming, and to the best practices regarding mental health care, and that ADA requirements as well as other factors make it impracticable to redesign the current jail to better use. The 2015 Disability Rights Center "Report on Inspection of the Santa Barbara County Jail" (<http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/pubs/702801.pdf>), links a number of inadequacies in the jail to the physical limitations of the current jail facility, despite Sheriff Brown's introduction of a number of "positive programs and practices."

In a recent conversation with Lt. Mark Mahurin, Jail Grievance Coordinator, he noted that the new jail (having been envisioned even before the possibility of funding a STAR complex was conceived) is specifically designed to enable the expansion of treatment programming.

I believe any successful initiative to address recidivism of persons with histories of serious mental illness and substance abuse must by necessity start with a strong partnership with the Department of Behavioral Wellness, adopting programming in the jail that constructs a bridge to adequate mental health services in the community upon diversion or release. For this reason, (though I confess to know next to nothing about funding options), I support construction of a modernized jail.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lynne Gibbs