

Ramirez, Angelica

# Public Comment - Public Safety

**From:** Cooper Matthieson <ctmatthieson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 12:26 PM  
**To:** sbcob; Williams, Das  
**Subject:** Public Comment Submission: SB Board of Supervisors Meeting 4/12/2021



**Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.**

Dear Supervisor Williams,

My name's Cooper Matthieson and currently live downtown in the first supervisorial district. I've lived here for almost my whole life, I currently work in Goleta, and am deeply committed to making Santa Barbara a safer and more equitable community. Given the following facts:

- 1.
2. Trauma and poverty are the
3. two largest influences on "criminal" behavior
- 4.
- 5.
6. Incarceration is a traumatic
7. experience that is accompanied by socio-economic marginalization
- 8.
- 9.
10. SB County disproportionately
11. incarcerates Black and Brown community members, who are already socio-economically marginalized through interconnected racist systems in our county related to housing, education, employment, healthcare, etc.
- 12.
- 13.
14. There is conclusive evidence
15. that shows traditional policing methods and incarceration do **not**
16. reduce recidivism
- 17.
- 18.
19. More than \$255million (68.3%)
20. of the County's current public safety budget is invested into the supervision (Probation), prosecution (District Attorney), and policing and incarceration (Sheriff) of community members, all of which create additional trauma and reinforce cycles of poverty,
21. thereby decreasing public safety
- 22.

I urge the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to make the following changes for the 2021-2022 fiscal year:

- 1.
2. Reduce Sheriff's Office

3. funding by a *minimum*
4. of \$26.7million and 165 FTE's this year in order to support a consistent decline of average
5. daily jail population and bring their office's budget in line with or below comparable counties.
- 6.

Invest the \$26.7million in:

- 2.
3. Community-based organizations
4. and initiatives led by folks who have similar identities and life experiences to those who are most impacted by the criminal legal system in order to utilize alternatives to incarceration, true community-based diversion programs that are not affiliated with
5. law enforcement or criminal legal institutions, and more practical and effective transitional services for individuals in custody. Examples of appropriate community-based allocations include funding for:
6.
  - 
  - Healing Justice Santa Barbara's
    - partnership with the Healing Center at UCSB's Hosford Clinic which provides Black community members with free culturally competent and trauma informed professional mental health services.
    - 
    - Note: Changes to Sheriff
      - practices such as being in plain clothes while on duty, as demonstrated by SBPD, are far from adequate when it comes to increasing mental health support for community members that are marginalized.
      -
    -
  - 
  - Local organizations such
    - as Healing Justice Santa Barbara, El Centro, Freedom 4 Youth, CAUSE, Ethnic Studies Now!, and many others who have been doing this work for many years while severely underfunded. These organizations provide services in the fields of mental health, education,
    - employment, leadership, housing, clothing, food access, violence prevention, immigration, environmental protection, self-esteem and efficacy, arts & culture, etc...
    - 
    -
  - Success Stories Program
    - which utilizes a dialogic approach to addressing the implications of patriarchy and toxic masculinity, as they repeatedly manifest in the objectification of womxn, the perceived need to show physical dominance or violence over others in order to be "more of
    - a man", and the prioritization of money over healthy relationships. Local nonprofit Freedom 4 Youth has trained facilitators of this program.
    - 
    -
  - Freedom to Choose which
    - supports individuals in the development of skills related to communication and relationships, fosters emotional intelligence, and dives into the root causes of impulsive, anger-driven, trauma-reactionary behaviors.
    -

- 3.
4. Affordable housing initiatives
5. in order to accelerate the currently tenuous and sometimes impossible process of finding housing, which can take several years or force local residents to relocate due to cost of living. The lack of affordable and accessible housing for low-income residents
6. disproportionately impacts Black and Brown community members, which increases the likelihood of involvement in the criminal legal system.
- 7.

I would also like to support the implementation of the demands made by CLUE SB as stated below:

- 4.
5. Increase funding for the
6. Public Defender's Office to expand holistic advocacy and culturally competent staff to improve advocacy across the racial/ethnic spectrum.
- 7.

- 5.
6. Fund seed money to study
7. a possible Civilian Oversight Commission to help assure transparency and accountability from the Sheriff's Office, alter the policing practices and procedures that reinforce trauma, and deter police misconduct.
- 8.

- 
- Possible results of this
- include the immediate stop to the Sheriff's cooperation with Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), deputy trainings on language justice best practices, and regularly required cultural competency and anti-racism trainings.
- 

- 6.
7. Reallocate more funds for
8. the Behavioral Wellness Department to provide non-jail alternatives for mental health and addiction needs.
- 9.

***While I am unfortunately not able to make public comment during the meeting today, I hope that you take a moment to read these requests and work on our behalf to implement changes to our budget that truly reflect our district/county's values. There is no better way to demonstrate our beliefs and values than doing so concretely with our budget.***

Regards,

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Cooper Matthieson (he/his)  
[ctmatthieson@gmail.com](mailto:ctmatthieson@gmail.com)

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Megan Turley <surfgirlmt@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 11:07 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear County Supervisor,

I write to express my strong support to improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County. I respectfully but firmly call on you to reallocate our criminal justice budget to advance transformational changes:

Permanently reduce Sheriff's Department funding to support a long term average jail population of approximately 550.

Reduce general funding for our Sheriff's Department by up to \$26.7 million and 165 FTEs to bring our Sheriff Department budget in line with comparable counties.

Reduce Sheriff's Department funding for traditional policing that doesn't reduce recidivism. Reallocate funds to community-based diversion and alternatives to jail, including more funds for the Behavioral Wellness Department to provide non-jail alternatives for mental health and addiction needs. Reallocate funds to support transition planning for jail residents returning to our community.

Increase funding for the Public Defender Department to expand holistic advocacy and culturally competent staff to improve advocacy across the racial/ethnic spectrum.

Reallocate funds to County CEO to expand and centralize data collection and analytics. Require Departments to provide evidence-based data for programs to reduce recidivism.

Offer a grant to the Sheriff's Department to expand jail internet and volunteer access - - including the award winning Freedom to Choose program that reduces recidivism.

Rethink plans for \$28M to refurbish the South County Jail. Reduce footprint to about 200 jail beds. Repurpose funds to build transitional housing to help stabilize eligible jail residents' re-entry into our community. Build a separate assessment center to screen and divert those who are appropriate for community-based alternatives.

Fund seed money to study a possible Civilian Oversight Commission to help assure Sheriff Department transparency and accountability, and deter police misconduct.

Transformational change requires courage. I will watch for you to vote for big change now. The commissioned KPMG studies and we, the people, will support you in this.

Sincerely,  
Megan Turley

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Date: April 12, 2021

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Stephen Pope <stephen@heaveneverywhere.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 11:56 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Stephen Pope

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Date: April 12, 2021



**Ramirez, Angelica**

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**From:** Martha Peyton <mmpeyton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 10:38 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Martha Peyton

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Date: April 12, 2021

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Felicity Landa <felicitylanda@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 10:38 AM  
**To:** Williams, Das; Hart, Gregg; Hartmann, Joan; Nelson, Bob; Lavagnino, Steve; sbcob  
**Subject:** Comment for Public Safety Budget Meeting 4/12/2021

**Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.**

Board of Supervisors,

I am writing today as a member of the Santa Barbara Eastside community, a mother, and a full time worker for a low income housing community.

Santa Barbara county has long known that incarceration rates disproportionately affect Black and Brown community members, which has only served to further the socio-economic divides within the county, which persist in housing, education, employment, healthcare, and elsewhere. The treatment of the community by the sheriff's office is especially telling, I have met sheriff deputies who have treated myself and the residents of my neighborhood poorly, far worse than any SB Police Department officers.

The county board has long touted their commitment to restoring and uplifting the community, so why exactly, is more than \$255million or 68.3% of the County's current public safety budget invested into the punishment of that community? Supervision, prosecution, and policing and incarceration of community members, all of which create additional trauma and reinforce cycles of poverty, thereby decreasing public safety. The research on this is extensive and clear.

Law Enforcement has not been preventing crime, in fact the Eastside is suffering greatly from gun violence and petty theft, while some residents suffer from drug addiction with absolutely no tangible assistance of counseling and health care, just the threat of incarceration—which is not a solution for assistance and rehabilitation.

All these things point to what we already know are the largest influences on "crime": Poverty and Trauma. Never in my five plus years of residency and work in this neighborhood, has law enforcement, or anyone from the county actually done anything to help.

I urge the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to make the following changes for the 2021-2022 fiscal year:

1. Reduce Sheriff's Office funding by a *minimum* of \$26.7million and 165 FTE's this year. The Jail population has been consistently declining, and investment in the community is desperately needed. Our sheriff's office receives approximately 26.7 million dollars more than any other comparable county,

Invest the \$26.7million in:

1. Community-based organizations and initiatives led by folks who have similar identities and life experiences to those who are most impacted by the criminal legal system in order to utilize alternatives to incarceration, true community-based diversion programs that are not affiliated with law enforcement or criminal legal institutions, and more practical and effective transitional services for individuals in custody. Examples of appropriate community-based allocations include funding for:

- Healing Justice Santa Barbara's partnership with the Healing Center at UCSB's Hosford Clinic which provides Black community members with free culturally competent and trauma informed professional mental health services.

- Note: Changes to Sheriff practices such as being in plain clothes while on duty, as demonstrated by SBPD, are far from adequate when it comes to increasing mental health support for community members that are marginalized.

- Local organizations such as Healing Justice Santa Barbara, El Centro, Freedom 4 Youth, CAUSE, Ethnic Studies Now!, and many others who have been doing this work for many years while severely underfunded. These organizations provide services in the fields of mental health, education, employment, leadership, housing, clothing, food access, violence prevention, immigration, environmental protection, self-esteem and efficacy, arts & culture, etc...

- Success Stories Program which utilizes a dialogic approach to addressing the implications of patriarchy and toxic masculinity, as they repeatedly manifest in the objectification of womxn, the perceived need to show physical dominance or violence over others in order to be "more of a man", and the prioritization of money over healthy relationships. Local nonprofit Freedom 4 Youth has trained facilitators of this program.

- Freedom to Choose which supports individuals in the development of skills related to communication and relationships, fosters emotional intelligence, and dives into the root causes of impulsive, anger-driven, trauma-reactionary behaviors.

2. Affordable housing initiatives, and organizations like Santa Barbara Community Housing Corporation, in order to accelerate the currently tenuous and sometimes impossible process of finding housing, which can take several years or force local residents to relocate due to cost of living. The lack of affordable and accessible housing for low-income residents disproportionately impacts Black and Brown community members, which increases the likelihood of involvement in the criminal legal system.

I would also like to support the implementation of the demands made by CLUE SB as stated below:

3. Increase funding for the Public Defender's Office to expand holistic advocacy and culturally competent staff to improve advocacy across the racial/ethnic spectrum.

4. Fund seed money to study a possible Civilian Oversight Commission to help assure transparency and accountability from the Sheriff's Office, alter the policing practices and procedures that reinforce trauma, and deter police misconduct.

· Possible results of this include the immediate stop to the Sheriff's cooperation with Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), deputy trainings on language justice best practices, and regularly required cultural competency and anti-racism trainings.

1. Reallocate more funds for the Behavioral Wellness Department to provide non-jail alternatives for mental health and addiction needs.

Felicity Donald  
Community Member

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Linda Honikman <linda.honikman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 9:56 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Linda Honikman

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## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Martha Santrizos <zosmar@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 9:09 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Martha Santrizos

---

Date: April 12, 2021



## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** alison h werts <alison@wertsfilms.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 8:32 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
alison h werts

---

Date: April 12, 2021

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Juan Pablo Herrada <avpsb54@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 8:15 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Juan Pablo Herrada

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Date: April 12, 2021

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Mary Sue Anderson <msa@silcom.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 7:44 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Sincerely,  
Mary Sue Anderson

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Date: April 12, 2021

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**From:** Charles Dennis Alger <alohacda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 4:36 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Improve racial justice and prioritize humane treatment for justice-involved people in our County.

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Date: April 12, 2021



## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** JoAnn Bell <joannmbell@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 4:12 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
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Offer a grant to the Sheriff's Department to expand jail internet and volunteer access -- including the award winning Freedom to Choose program that reduces recidivism.

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Fund seed money to study a possible Civilian Oversight Commission to help assure Sheriff Department transparency and accountability, and deter police misconduct.

Transformational change requires courage. I will watch for you to vote for big change now. The commissioned KPMG studies and we, the people, will support you in this.

Sincerely,  
JoAnn Bell

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Date: April 12, 2021