

Ramirez, Angelica

Public Comment - Public Safety Group 2

**From:** Liz Holohan <lizrholohan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 1, 2021 1:51 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Invest in our community, NOT in the policing and incarceration



**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 Clerk of the Board,

I have been a resident of Santa Barbara for the past 5 years. I work at UCSB and am a leader in UCSB's Professional Women's Association. I personally have been impacted by the criminal legal system because I am a citizen of the US and care about the health and future of every being on this earth. **The moment is NOW. Do not wait.**

I am writing to insist that the County take steps towards **permanent and ongoing reduction of the jail population.**

One crucial step you can take towards increasing public safety is to reduce the annual budget for the Sheriff by \$26.7million for the 2021-2022 FY, as well as reducing the budgets for the District Attorney and Probation Department. Community members are demanding less criminalization and more practical community-based support. SB County currently spends more on supervising (Probation), prosecuting (District Attorney), policing and incarceration (Sheriff) than it does on Public Health, Behavioral Wellness, and Child Support Services combined. Further, SB's rates of arrest are above the CA average while the reported crime rate is well below the CA average.

Our County spends far too much on criminalizing people instead of investing in peoples' development and futures. Local justice system institutions have proven that they are incapable of rehabilitation in ways that effectively reduce crime and recidivism, ultimately decreasing public safety. Investing in affordable housing, community-based initiatives that function as alternatives to incarceration, diversion programs, and transitional support services for folks reintegrating after being in custody, mental health services, and more is what true public safety looks like.

**This is an opportunity for SB County to invest in systems that serve as preventative measures for crime.** Investing in affordable housing, community-based initiatives that function as alternatives to incarceration, diversion programs, and transitional support services for folks reintegrating after being in custody, mental health services, and more is what true public safety looks like. We currently invest in institutions that perpetuate trauma and poverty more than anything else.

Now is the time to reimagine public safety and find new ways to support the residents of SB County.

Sincerely,  
Liz Holohan

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Kerry Lane <klane@ucsb.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 3, 2021 8:23 AM  
**To:** sbcob; Nelson, Bob  
**Subject:** Reduce policing and jailing!

**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 Nelson,

I am Kerry Lane, a graduate student and 4-year resident of Santa Barbara.

I am writing to insist that the County take steps towards permanent and ongoing reduction of the jail population. One crucial step you can take towards increasing public safety is to reduce the annual budget for the Sheriff by \$26.7million for the 2021-2022 FY, as well as reducing the budgets for the District Attorney and Probation Department. Community members are demanding less criminalization and more practical community-based support. SB County currently spends more on supervising (Probation), prosecuting (District Attorney), policing and incarceration (Sheriff) than it does on Public Health, Behavioral Wellness, and Child Support Services combined. Further, SB's rates of arrest are above the CA average while the reported crime rate is well below the CA average. Our County spends far too much on criminalizing people instead of investing in peoples' development and futures. Local justice system institutions have proven that they are incapable of rehabilitation in ways that effectively reduce crime and recidivism, ultimately decreasing public safety. **Investing in affordable housing, community-based initiatives that function as alternatives to incarceration, diversion programs, and transitional support services for folks reintegrating after being in custody, mental health services, and more is what true public safety looks like.**

First and foremost, the County currently surveils, polices, prosecutes, and incarcerates Black and Brown children at alarmingly violent rates compared to white children. There are currently 0 white children incarcerated in all of SB County. 94% of children on probation supervision (both in and out of custody) are Black, Brown, or Asian. These statistics demonstrate two things: (1) SB County currently invests in state-sanctioned violence against Black and Brown children and (2) alternatives to incarceration, preferential treatment and sentencing in the legal process, practically nonexistent policing and surveillance, and diversion opportunities are reserved for white children. It is vital to recognize that most children who are incarcerated are also at or below the poverty line for various reasons that can also be traced back to how SB County allocates its financial resources.

Given the strong connection between housing instability and mental health challenges, I want to stress the importance of creating and investing in systems that address the root causes of criminalized behaviors and not the symptoms of the problem. A significant percentage of residents, predominantly BIPOC residents, in our County have been in housing crises for years, decades, and even over centuries. SB County has yet to succeed in creating permanent supportive housing programs that combine community-based services and long-term rental assistance. SB also consistently wields one of the highest rates of poverty in California, largely due to active waves of gentrification that push Black and Brown residents out of the community. The vast majority of individuals who become incarcerated in SB County are not property owners. They are renters; disproportionately Black and Brown; near or below the poverty line; and have active mental health challenges. This is especially relevant for children in our County considering 81% of youth in the local system have open mental health cases compared to the 48% CA average.

Investing in incarceration while not investing in supportive housing efforts reinforces the houselessness-jail cycle that plagues our County. At a Community Corrections Partnership Racial Equity Sub-Group meeting in

October 2019, Chief Wasilewski presented data showcasing how 91% of the individuals whom the Sheriff's Office disgustingly labeled as "super offenders" (people who had been incarcerated 5+ times that year) were considered transient or actively houseless. This statistic clearly demonstrates how our County has prioritized the criminalization of people in need and failed to invest in adequate forms of support.

This is an opportunity for SB County to invest in systems that serve as preventative measures for crime. **Investing in affordable housing, community-based initiatives that function as alternatives to incarceration, diversion programs, and transitional support services for folks reintegrating after being in custody, mental health services, and more is what true public safety looks like.** We currently invest in institutions that perpetuate trauma and poverty more than anything else. Now is the time to reimagine public safety and find new ways to support the residents of SB County.

Sincerely,

Kerry Lane

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Kerry Lane (*she/her/hers*)  
PhD Candidate, Pruitt Lab  
Mechanical Engineering Department  
University of California, Santa Barbara