



Chelsea Lenzi

General Public Comment

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Sent: Monday, May 11, 2026 10:53 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Public Comment for 5.12.2026
Attachments: supervisors^J seu.docx

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Please see attached Letter to the Board of Supervisors for Public Comment on May 12th. Thank you. Shirlee Heitman, Indivisible Santa Maria.



INDIVISIBLE SANTA MARIA

Dear Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors.

We are in support of the position of SEIU Labor Union and its objections to cutting crucial staff and services that affect our most vulnerable populations. This also includes the staffing cuts of those that deliver these services to the community. They are the backbone of County work.

We are especially concerned with the continued rise in costs from the Sheriff's Department in overtime, cuts to their civil workforce and proposed expansion of incarceration facilities, i.e. the jail

The proposed layoffs target civilian staff, not sworn personnel, even though civilian workers are not the source of the department's chronic overtime and budget overruns. Once again, the lowest-paid workers and the public they serve are being asked to absorb the consequences of overall fiscal mismanagement.

As of early 2026, Santa Barbara remains a safe county, with overall crime rates trending slightly below national averages, though specific neighborhoods vary in safety. The safety rating puts the County at **21%** below the national average. Hence, while crime is not wholly deterred, our County is safe and secure in comparison to other parts of the State. Let's spend our tax dollars on housing and health care instead. That is not only our county needs, but they are also the needs of all of California. Just look to the surveys of residents to prove this point.

Thank you for your consideration.

Shirlee Heitman, Leadership Team