



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** Child Support Services  
**Department No.:** 045  
**For Agenda Of:** 01/09/2018  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimated Time:** 15 minutes  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Carrie Topliffe, 568-2326  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: Mette Richardson, 568-2329

**SUBJECT:** Presentation on County's participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file an presentation on the County's participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity; and
- b) Determine that the above actions are organizational and administrative activities of government that are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5).

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to provide the Board with a presentational update on the County's participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).

**Background:**

In all of the United States, Santa Barbara County ranks as the 6<sup>th</sup> most inequitable for income distribution. The lowest 20% of wage earners have an average annual income of \$13,700, while the top 5% of residents have an average annual income of \$478,000. In California, currently 60% of children are on Medi-Cal insurance due to their family's economic status.

The County provides essential services to many of the most vulnerable members of the community, prompting the County's interest in understanding any structural reasons why this underclass is growing, and exploring the County's ability to create policies and practices to help turn the tide. To do this, the County participated in the GARE's "Learning Year," joining with colleagues from Ventura and Los Angeles Counties to study the roots of discriminatory practices to create a "Racial Equity Action Plan."

GARE initiatives are currently occurring in 30 states and 100 jurisdictions. With so many other Santa Barbara County initiatives in progress, it was a small Santa Barbara team that met monthly throughout the year (The GARE team: Carrie Topliffe of Child Support Services, Susan Klein-Rothschild of Public Health, Kelly McLaughlin of Child Support Services, Naomi Kovacs of Supervisor Wolf's office, and Yaneris Muniz of Behavioral Wellness). In conceiving this project, the GARE team attempted to be realistic about the time limitations and direct its efforts toward augmenting an ongoing county initiative.

For these reasons, the GARE team chose a project to enhance access to County services for the Spanish speaking public as the County's "Racial Equity Action Plan." Since 2000, Federal Executive Order 13166 (now Title VI of the Civil Rights Act) has mandated that government services be available to those with limited English language proficiency. At Santa Barbara County, we have over 1,100 bilingual front line and managerial staff, websites with Spanish translations, and important documents in Spanish and English. The GARE team endeavored to evaluate the effectiveness of the Spanish language presence and recommend suggestions about low or no-cost enhancements.

The GARE team will make a presentation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the "Learning Year," and request the Board's endorsement of the "Racial Equity Action Plan."

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The fiscal and facilities impact of the County's participation in GARE is anticipated to be minimal.

**Special Instructions:**

None

**Authored by:**

Carrie Topliffe, Director