

LATE
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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment, Jail System Housing Options*

From: Jeffrey Shuman <jeffshu51@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 7:21 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Jail housing options

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.

I would like to make a public comment on the reducing the pod being built at Santa Maria North County Jail from one and a half pods to one pod

I've included my statement to be submitted to the board

Thank you

Jeff Shuman

1625 Laguna St., Apt. 2

Santa Barbara, California 93101

Good morning Supervisors,

My name is Jeff Shuman, and I'm here today not just to oppose jail expansion—but to offer a proven alternative.

Whether it's one-and-a-half pods or scaled down to one pod, the reality is the same—we do not need more jail cells. We need treatment beds.

Other jurisdictions, like Cook County in Chicago, are already doing this. They've implemented programs that combine mental health treatment, substance use care, and court supervision for young adults ages 18 to 25. These programs connect individuals to a psychiatrist, a therapist, medication, and structured support—instead of cycling them through jail.

And it works.

Graduates of these programs have recidivism rates in the single digits over time—far lower than what we see when people are repeatedly arrested and incarcerated.

Here in Santa Barbara County, we have a critical gap. There is virtually nothing for individuals with dual diagnosis—people struggling with both mental illness and substance use. These are the very individuals filling our jail.

Instead, we arrest them, release them, and arrest them again—creating a revolving door that drives up costs for law enforcement, the courts, and the jail system.

We are spending roughly \$120,000 per year to house one inmate, not including the added cost of repeated arrests and court proceedings. A structured model—one year of residential treatment followed by one year of outpatient care—is not only more humane, it is far more cost-effective.

If we intervene early—between ages 18 and 25—we can stabilize people, connect them to care, and keep them out of the system entirely.

These programs can reduce jail populations by as much as 30%.

So the question before you is not how many pods to build—it's whether we are going to keep funding a cycle that doesn't work.

Supervisors, I urge you: vote no on both the one-and-a-half pod expansion and the one pod alternative. Redirect those funds into long-term treatment infrastructure. We don't need more jail cells—we need beds for treatment.

Beds, not cells.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

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Katherine Douglas

From: Pamela Wilkinson <ppwilkinson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2026 3:37 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Budget Planning Workshop 4/17/26 Jail System Housing Options comment

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 Supervisors,

We know that a significant number of people in jail in Santa Barbara County have a mental health condition. We know that there is an inverse relationship between mental health treatment and incarceration. We know we could significantly reduce the number of those in the jail with mental illness by focusing on enhancing community-based resources/treatment and jail-to-community linkages.

Yet the issue of mentally ill in the jail is still being entirely ignored in the current Strategic Planning Initiative for Jail Diversion. Why?

We need to limit the jail expansion to just one housing unit and commit the funds saved to providing the missing links in services to the mentally ill. This will better serve our population with mental health conditions, and provide overall savings, as incarceration, especially with repeat "offenders" is more expensive and less humane than providing services.

Thank you for your consideration,
Pamela Wilkinson
Resident of SB County