

From: Kathleen M Sharum <ksharum@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 11:28 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
Subject: Gun Violence Awareness Day and Wear Orange weekend



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 Madam Chair Hartmann and Members of the Board,

My name is Kathy Sharum and I'm on the steering committee for the Santa Maria chapter of SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) and a resident of Santa Maria.

I just want to briefly speak about the topic of gun violence happening all around our country and in our communities. Clearly the events in Buffalo, NY and Uvalde, TX are still fresh in our minds but there have been eight more mass shootings since the killings at Robb Elementary in Texas. There is so much that could be done at the National level to curb shootings but my comments have more to do with what happens here locally.

SURJ is an organization that works to undermine white supremacy and to strengthen and support a racial justice agenda. The killings in Buffalo were clearly racially motivated but I know that some will quickly deem others as not racially motivated but I would argue that there is a tie to racism to nearly every single one. Since becoming a member of SURJ I have learned how racism permeates every institution and nearly every facet of our lives. There is so much data to prove white people benefit in more ways from wages to home ownership, to education, to health care and on and on. Santa Maria is a community that is majority people of color and we have more than our share of gun violence, violence that is often directed at our young people. This should not be the outcome you or I want for our communities or our county. We know that so many are below the poverty level. Many are suffering from generational trauma. People are suffering from systemic racism and I am looking to the Board to help change that.

I know this Board has proclaimed racism to be a health crisis and I thank you for that and we all recognize it as a first step. I also thank the Board for proclaiming June 3rd. National Gun Violence Awareness Day and the next days as Wear Orange weekend. I am grateful for the funds directed towards improving mental health and protecting our beautiful environment. All of those things help. I ask that the Board please approach all of your decisions you make by looking through the equity lens. There is much work to be done and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Sharum
 (SURJ Santa Maria)
 805-828-2305