



April 3, 2015

Clue Santa Barbara
1500 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

1st District Supervisor Salud Carbajal
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Santa Barbara County Supervisor Salud Carbajal:

CLUE SB strongly urges the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to approve the 2015 Housing and Recovery Action Team (HEART) five-year plan. It is time to bring long overdue economic justice to those with mental illness in our county. We urge the BOS to include the HEART budget recommendations in the Santa Barbara County budget for ADMHS beginning this year, 2015.

CLUE SB represents faith communities on the HEART board. In 2014, CLUE SB began collaborating with a wide variety of community groups and leaders including ADMHS, Families Act leaders, C3H, and Santa Barbara County staff. During the same time, the BOS stated the need for a comprehensive long-range plan to close the unacceptable gap in diverse housing and recovery opportunities for those with mental illness in our county. The 2015 HEART Plan includes specific recommendations for housing services, recovery services, a timeline, and budget component. We are confident HEART fulfills the direction given by the BOS in budget meetings in April 2014.

Last year CLUE SB provided the BOS with our report. The report details Santa Barbara County's ongoing failure to implement alternative housing and recovery for those with mental illness in the county jail (approximately 150 daily). This report included current additional county expenses resulting from the county's inaction each year.¹

	Jail	Community Treatment	
Housing	\$44,572	\$11,400	
Mental Health Services	\$4,030	\$18,600	
Medical Treatment	\$4,200	\$3,500	
Total	\$52,872	\$33,500	
Savings for Community Treatment Option			\$19,372 per person \$2,905,800 per year

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¹CLUE Santa Barbara (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) "Why are we still taking people with mental illness to jail who don't belong there?" Report On Recommended Structural Changes Dec 2013 pg.8

County staff and ADMHS staff are already looking at The HEART five-year plan. This plan addresses past failures by creating 1,024 more units through land lease, master lease, and new housing. Initiatives, such as that in Cook County's Corporation for Supportive housing (CHS),² specifically ensure frequent users of jail and mental health services are moved from jail to community alternatives. Consumers would have a new system for access. A yearly performance evaluation encourages ongoing prevention interventions due to accountability for quality service. The plan ensures the County that we would be making the best use of county dollars across the systems including the jail, hospital, shelters, and care facilities.

There is consensus that Santa Barbara County needs to allocate a substantial increase in funding for ADMHS. The Tri-West County ADMHS Assessment Report provided evidence that Santa Barbara County allocates far less for ADMHS than the standard allocation from other comparative County General Fund budgets.³

Benchmark Counties	Population	County Contribution to Services
Santa Barbara	426,878	\$3.14 million (approximately \$7,356 per 1,000 population)
Monterey	421,898	\$600,000 (approximately \$1,400 per 1,000) ⁵⁶
San Luis Obispo	271,969	\$6.5 million (approximately \$23,000 per 1,000)
San Mateo (best practice)	727,209	\$23 million (approximately \$31,600 per 1,000)

What the BOS has done to raise its own salaries to the standard of surrounding comparable counties, it needs to now do for the ADMHS department, serving the most needy with mental illness living currently on the streets and in our county jail. Economic justice requires no less.

The HEART plan begins with a recommended county investment of \$895,000 in 2015-2016. It requires a commitment of additional funds each year until:

- Funding meets the standard of comparable counties
- The increased quantity of housing units closes the current gap
- The quality of ADMHS service meets best practice standards.

By 2019, an improved evaluation process would be developed and in place. Community and outside evaluations would determine whether Santa Barbara County has a system in place that provides compassionate care for those with mental illness achieved through economic justice.

Sincerely,
Maureen Earls
President CLUE SB Board
(805) 450-6111
email: maureenearls00@gmail.com

² <http://www.csh.org/csh-solutions/serving-vulnerable-populations/re-entry-populations/local-criminal-justice-work/cook-county-frequent-users-of-jail-and-mental-health/>

³ County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Analysis and Assessment of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Project 2 and 3 Final Report County of Santa Barbara May 2013 pg 76