

Lenzi, Chelsea

From: Equity for SB <equityforsantabarbara@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 7:55 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Agenda Item Concerning Sheriff Dept.'s Agenda Item - Support for CIT Funding

EQUITY FOR SANTA BARBARA

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April 17, 2018

Clerk of the Board
sbcob@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

RE: Agenda Item Concerning Sheriff Dept.'s Agenda Item - Support for CIT Funding

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Equity For Santa Barbara fully supports NAMI's call for the continuation of the Sheriff Department's Crisis Intervention Team Training (CIT) program. We agree that it is an essential component of the County's Stepping Up initiative to keep persons with mental illness out of the jail, and cannot be allowed to lapse for lack of a single position that can keep it alive until a means of fully funding CIT is identified. We support NAMI's recommendation to fund a single position, as well as appointment of an ad hoc working group of Stepping Up to identify sustainable funding for the program.

From our research on Use of Force policy, we know how important de-escalation is to making life safer for officers and community members, particularly those with mental health issues. Nearly half of Santa Barbara County's use of force cases in 2017 involved persons exhibiting symptoms of mental illness (<https://www.independent.com/news/2018/feb/22/eddie-hsueh-santa-barbaras-great-peace-officer/>).

We agree with NAMI that it is essential to the success of the Stepping Up Initiative, and the welfare of our community, to preserve and enhance the unfunded CIT program by establishing sustainable funding for the CIT Coordinator's position in 2018-2019, while continuing to pursue funding for the CIT program.

We support their recommendations to:

1. Fund a full-time CIT Coordinator's position embedded in the Sheriff's Dept. in 2018-2019.
2. Appoint a Stepping Up Task Force working group, including community stakeholders, to identify and pursue funding for a sustainable CIT program serving law enforcement personnel across the county.

Sincerely,

David Stück
Scott Ruskamp
Board Members, Equity for Santa Barbara