

August 25, 2021

To the Measure X Community Advisory Board:

As part of your annual assessment of community needs in Contra Costa County, please put extra attention this year on the need for REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY.

I ask that you disregard the heated rhetoric of the De Fund the Police brigade, and recognize that the *real* call is for rethinking and reevaluating the way we police our people. We DO NOT need to give Sherriff Livingston more control and more money. He has already shown that he isn't in tune with the communities he serves any more, and it is time for fresh leadership – leadership that is STRONG and yet that is not supportive of doing things the old way, just because that's the way it's always been done.

We need to seriously re-look at the limitations of the current training program for law enforcement. It isn't nearly long enough to absorb all the material the trainees are expected to master, and it doesn't involve enough real experiential learning – the kind that comes with living amongst and learning about the people you are being asked to police. This is easily changeable and would make a big difference.

I also firmly believe that mental health issues are at the root of the majority of the police calls in our region, be they related to domestic violence, drug abuse, petty theft as sustenance, or homelessness. I believe our Public Safety officers *also* face tremendous mental health stress, and ALSO should be **required** as part of their job to **receive regular mental health support services**. If we shifted some of our resources to focus on the mental health of **both** the struggling population in Contra Costa County and the law enforcement officials entrusted with serving us, outcomes would improve for ALL!!!

Please be bold and recognize the winds of change are upon us. Harness them. It will mean progress that benefits everyone.

Thank you for your service to the public.

Best regards,

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