

Board of Supervisors Laura's Law Evaluation Contractor Remarks—March 1, 2016

Fellow Supervisors, my name is Douglas Dunn and I speak as a District 3 At-Large Mental Health Commissioner and Consolidated Planning Advisory Workgroup Family Member. I represent many families with loved ones living with serious mental illnesses. I strongly support Supervisor Piepho's move to pull this consent item and open it for public discussion. Here's why:

For the past 3 years, I've been involved in all Laura's Law activities, including workgroups involving RDA Consultants. Specifically, I actively participated the summer, 2014 workgroup in which RDA made recommendations for the Board's October 7, 2014 meeting. I sent RDA my best-at-the-time financial analysis which I had sent each of you. RDA disregarded it. At a special October 2, 2014 meeting involving county behavioral health and RDA, Don Green effectively demolished RDA's outrageous legal and court cost program estimates. I know because I was there. Behavioral Health and RDA had a final opportunity to correct these faulty estimates but chose not to do so. As a result, on October 7, the Board took apart that report which contained bogus financial information for which I understand behavioral health paid approximately \$50,000.

- Does the Board want to risk a repeat performance by the same entity?

Pages 44 and 45 of the Mental Health Services Act 2016-2017 Plan Update references a competitive bid process which selected RDA Consultants for \$400,000 for 3 years.

Really? At a spring-early summer, 2015 Consolidated Planning Advisory Workgroup meeting, a voting member specifically asked if a Laura's Law Program Evaluator had been selected and the contract cost involved. Behavioral Health staff said NO, but would not publically reveal the cost. At the same time, I was also actively involved in the competitive bid process which selected Mental Health Systems, Inc. as the county Laura's Law contractor. During this time, no such Request for Proposal was listed on the Behavioral Health website. I know because I regularly checked it. If such a bid process was held, I and many other citizen advocates were apparently kept in the dark. At a recent public Laura's Law workgroup meeting, RDA Consultants stated that they will partner with Drs. Jeffrey Swanson and Marvin Schwartz, the Duke University researchers who produced the widely acclaimed 2013 New York state Kendra's Law study. Their qualifications are unrivaled. However, for \$400,000:

- Why were they not directly considered as one of the contract bidders?
- When and for how long was the Program Evaluation Contractor bidding process?
- How many citizens were included as bid evaluation team members?

Program Evaluation studies have been ~~contracted~~ ^{CONTRACTED} in other states with a similar 75 person target population for \$100,000 over 3 years. Has Behavioral Health:

- Investigated to see what 15 other California Laura's Law implementing counties are paying for Laura's Law Program Evaluations and compared their costs to ours?

Remember, this MHSA amount could treat from 5-12 Laura's Law clients, including housing, over each of 3 years. Please reconsider and ask Behavioral Health to use far more cost effective internal evaluation processes. There is still time to do so. Thank you for your careful consideration. Any questions or additional information needed?