



Meeting Date: August 26, 2025
Agenda Item No. 24
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August 25, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee Proposal and Unlocking the County Reserves

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

On behalf of **Business For Good**, [a member of the **Invest in San Diego Families coalition/the Community Budget Alliance**], I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Sustainable Fiscal Planning** and the **Board Letter to Unlock County Reserves**, both brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs. Cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services, alongside unfunded mandates and increased local burdens, risk destabilizing the safety net and undermining the County's ability to meet urgent community needs.

Business For Good is a values-driven chamber representing over 100 small business owners dedicated to advancing economic equity, immigrants' rights, environmental justice, and solutions that address the cost of living for all San Diegans, we know firsthand how vital County services are to the well-being of residents, especially low-income communities, working families, older adults, veterans, and people with disabilities. These services cannot be left vulnerable to unpredictable decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

We believe the **Sustainable Fiscal Planning Subcommittee** offers a proactive, community-centered approach to

- Safeguard essential services;
- Explore equitable, sustainable local financing solutions;
- Protect vulnerable residents from preventable harm; and
- Maintain the County's strong financial standing and long-term investments.

Additionally, we strongly support the **proposal to unlock a portion of the County's reserves** to stabilize critical services at risk of cuts in the near term. These reserves represent a vital tool to cushion the community from harm and bridge urgent funding gaps. The public dollars potentially available will be invested in sensible, thoughtful ways that ensure that our most vulnerable, including children, seniors, and the disabled, continue to receive critical support and services.

By updating how County reserves are calculated, this policy will free up around \$300 million, without having to create additional public debt to the community or businesses. This policy also places stronger safeguards and accountability around the resulting reserve funds, ensuring that they can only be used in true emergencies. It

allows for a fiscally responsible, values-driven approach that allows the County to create a safety net for its communities through smarter planning for its constituents, and ensures that public dollars serve the public good.

We urge the Board to move forward on both proposals and thank you for your leadership during this challenging moment. The decisions made today will shape the well-being of San Diego's communities for years to come.

Sincerely,

Erica Castillo
Advocacy Co-Chair
Business For Good San Diego



August 25th, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Social Safety Net and Behavioral Health Systems Transformation and Unlocking the County Reserves

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer, Vice Chair Montgomery Steppe and Members of the Board,

On behalf of Climate Action Campaign, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal to establish an **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Social Safety Net and Behavioral Health Systems Transformation** and the **Board Letter to Unlock County Reserves**, both brought forward by Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

Due to unprecedented state and federal disinvestment in essential programs, San Diego County is facing serious fiscal uncertainty. Programs that our communities rely on to meet basic needs are at risk as cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, housing, Medi-Cal, and other core services undermine the County's ability to meet urgent needs of San Diego families.

Climate Action Campaign continues to fight for a pollution-free future where everyone can thrive, but this collective future and the well-being of our communities is at risk without vital County services, especially the health and safety of low-income communities, working families, older adults, veterans, and people with disabilities. These services cannot be left vulnerable to unpredictable decisions made in Washington or Sacramento.

We believe the **Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Social Safety Net and Behavioral Health Systems Transformation** offers a proactive, community-centered approach to

- Safeguard essential services;
- Explore equitable, sustainable local financing solutions;
- Protect vulnerable residents from preventable harm; and
- Maintain the County's strong financial standing and long-term investments.

It is also essential for the **County to unlock a portion of its reserves to stabilize critical services** and ensure programming that keeps families fed, housed, and healthy remain fully intact. These reserves represent a vital tool to cushion the community from harm and bridge urgent funding gaps. The public dollars potentially available will be invested in sensible, thoughtful ways that ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors continue to receive critical support and services.

By updating how County reserves are calculated, this policy will free up around \$300 million, without creating additional public debt to the community or businesses. Public dollars are to serve the public good and at this time when our communities need safeguards on essential programming, the County cannot hoard its wealth. Using a portion of the County's reserves is a necessity for the well-being of San Diego families.

We urge the Board to move forward on both proposals and thank you for your leadership during this challenging moment. The decisions made today will shape the well-being of San Diego's communities for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Serena Pelka', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Serena Pelka
Policy Advocate
Climate Action Campaign