



NORA VARGAS
CHAIRWOMAN
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM

DATE: April 9, 2024

04

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH EQUITY: HARNESSING PROPOSITION 1 BOND FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Proposition 1 is a two-part measure, that will amend the California Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and create a \$6.38 billion general obligation bond. The California MHSA will be reconfigured to be the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) which will allow for spending for substance abuse disorders and command spending for non-clinical housing services. Secondly, it creates a \$6.38 billion general obligation bond that would fund behavioral health treatment and residential facilities, and supportive housing for veterans and individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness with behavioral health challenges.

The County of San Diego's Behavioral Health Services Department, in collaboration with community providers; Behavioral Health Advocates; and Chairwoman Nora Vargas, have already done substantial work to identify key investments in the behavioral health continuum to optimize care for the County of San Diego and its communities. Specifically, the Board of Supervisors, under the Chairwoman's leadership, has emphasized the importance of equity, social determination of health, and the upstream investments as priorities for the behavioral health continuum.

Today's board action supports the critical steps of strategic planning and ordering of priorities needed to properly inform County advocacy and planning efforts to address our mental health crisis, invest in our community, and ensure an equitable use of bond funds.

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RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHAIRWOMAN NORA VARGAS

1. Direct the Interim Chief Administrative Officer to work with the Behavioral Health Services Director to create a process for seeking and investing Proposition 1 bond funding, informed by data; community advocates; and stakeholders, and return to the board within 120 days with a set of priorities to inform County planning efforts in areas such as mental health, substance abuse and housing services that would be eligible for these funds.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The County of San Diego has been actively working on addressing the behavioral health needs of our communities with a specific emphasis on our vulnerable communities. The County has launched several programs to address the unique and specific needs within our County, including the implementation of the CARE Act and Mobile Crisis Response Teams. Despite the implementations of County programs there continues to be a continuous disproportionate amount of infrastructure dedicated to addressing behavioral health needs, with a large disparity within South County. If approved, today’s actions will allow for an equitable distribution of Proposition 1 funding.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today’s actions contribute to the County of San Diego’s Sustainability Goals by prioritizing the long-term behavioral health needs of individuals, families, and the region through clear planning and advocacy.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts associated with today’s recommendations. There will be no change in General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

Nearly 1 in 7 adults in California experience a mental illness, and 1 of 26 has a serious mental illness that affects their daily activities. In 2020, there were 39,431 total number of emergency department discharges experiencing homelessness with a median age of 44 years old and an average length of stay of 7 days. Of the top 10 primary diagnoses found, behavioral health related diagnoses such as suicidal ideation and schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders were present. According to the Healthy People 2030 framework, 3.4% of adults 18 years and older with co-occurring substance use disorders and mental health disorders received both mental health care and specialty substance use treatment. Most adults will receive treatment for one disorder, but not both.

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On January 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution In Support of Proposition 1, Rebuilding California’s Mental health Systems. On March 5, 2024, California voters voted on Proposition 1, “Treatment Not Tents”, and passed the measure with 50.19% voting “Yes” throughout the state.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today’s proposed actions support the County of San Diego’s 2024-2029 Strategic Plan Initiatives of Equity (Health) and Community (Quality of Life) by ensuring there is an equitable implementation and use of bond funding for the County of San Diego.

Respectfully submitted,



NORA VARGAS
Supervisor, First District

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A