

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Desmond, Jim](#); [Supervisor Joel Anderson District 2](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [BOS, District1Community](#); [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#)  
**Cc:** [FGG, Public Comment](#); [La Prensa San Diego](#); [San Diego UT Senior Editor](#); [San Diego UT Community Op Ed](#); [Times of San Diego](#); [Voice of San Diego](#)  
**Subject:** [External] REFORMING THE COUNTY RESERVE POLICY (please include with documents for agenda #23)  
**Date:** Thursday, August 21, 2025 4:15:01 PM

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Good Afternoon, Supervisors,

This is essentially the same flawed proposal presented in May. In fact it looks to me like it has the same numbers as in May which may be off by enough to get us in trouble if taken at face value. Basically, it sets the stage to “defund” the police or tie up the funds needed for real emergencies. If you really want this sort of system, look at the cities who listened to the GFOA – most of which seem to have problems with basic services like police and fire..

So, the big picture is that you want to include both assigned and unassigned funds in the reserve funds, that is, funds you allocate for a specific purpose now and the funds needed to maintain the project in coming years, or for operational needs (per item 2 on p. 6 of the Board Letter.)

It’s kind of like giving candy to your kid today and tomorrow taking a quarter of it back because it is too sugary, or giving your kid his allowance today and a week later taking back a quarter of it of it for bad behavior.

Actually, it’s like the Feds taking back \$40 million of the money they approved for HHSA or them taking back \$6 million of the \$11 million grant for family and mental health services in the LaMesa Schools. So it seems that you are doing what you don’t want to happen.

You can expect this to generate huge problems – County Staff having to give back money they need to continue programs in the future – tension. Possible understaffing of vital Fire, Police, or EMT services, which may cause actual safety concerns – possible shortchanging of all the equity projects we recommended against, which may cause further societal disorder (once again pitting Haves vs. Have nots.)

There needs to be guarantees that we have enough funds in the reserves to maintain full emergency services, fire services in this age of huge BESS or EV caused unstoppable wildfires, police problems like being so overwhelmed they can't investigate potential violence, building parts that fly off or break needing repair, roads full of potholes or dangerous to drive on, and on and on.

A better alternative to reassigning funds from vital public safety accounts is to reassigning amounts from multiple sources, as the Sheriff's office seems to have had no problem with in Consent item 4 today. There, The funding sources were 2011 Realignment (\$305,000), Pretrial Release Program (\$322,350), and General Purpose Revenue (\$69,350). I am sure this type of funding from multiple sources is more practical than taking the funds to begin with.

You also need to define terms like assigned, unassigned, and unlocked funds in the ordinance. The people who reassign funds should have it in front of them for reference, not have to go looking for a definition.

In May, a number of us recently received a survey on what programs to cut. You should have used that as a guide to where excess funds could be taken, and codified that in the ordinance.

I'm glad that you fess up to approving \$635 million in funds you may not need. (\$1327-\$692 on p. 7 of the board letter = \$635.)

There is a reason that funds are allocated for future maintenance. I agree that five-year funding for some projects is excessive, but the present ordinance simply has too few guarantees that necessary services won't be reduced. This should have been introduced as an idea, not an ordinance.

You need to reject this scheme, at least base it on current numbers, disapprove this idea, and forget bringing it back,

Regards,

Paul Henkin