

From: [Victor Hernandez](#)
To: [Paloma Aguirre](#)
Cc: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] Opposition to Proposal to Phase Out OC Spray in Juvenile Detention Facilities
Date: Monday, August 25, 2025 9:35:28 AM

Dear Supervisor Aguirre,

As a National City resident (zip code 91950), I am writing to strongly oppose Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe's proposal to phase out oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray in San Diego County's juvenile detention facilities. I can not attend tomorrow's meeting so I am addressing this pressing issue directly to ensure my voice is heard. While I deeply support efforts to improve conditions and oversight in our juvenile justice system, banning OC spray would severely compromise the safety of both staff and youth in these facilities, with ripple effects on communities like National City.

I have closely followed discussions on juvenile justice reform, including the recent state investigation into potential civil rights issues in our county's facilities. OC spray is a critical non-lethal tool that allows probation officers to de-escalate volatile situations, preventing injuries that could result from physical confrontations. Juvenile detention facilities often house youth with complex trauma, mental health challenges, or behavioral issues, which can lead to unpredictable and sometimes violent incidents. Staff need safe, effective options to maintain order without resorting to hands-on interventions, which risk escalating conflicts and causing harm to both officers and youth.

Eliminating OC spray would force probation officers into more dangerous physical restraints, increasing the likelihood of injuries and undermining their ability to manage high-risk situations. Evidence from other jurisdictions demonstrates that, when used with rigorous training and strict protocols, OC spray is a safe and effective de-escalation tool. The San Diego County Probation Department already has guidelines for its use, and rather than an outright ban, the Board should focus on enhancing training, improving oversight, and ensuring accountability to address any concerns about misuse. This balanced approach would better serve our youth and staff while aligning with the community's desire for both safety and rehabilitation.

As a District 1 resident, I am particularly concerned about the impact on National City, where public safety and youth welfare are top priorities. Our community values reforms that protect vulnerable populations while ensuring those working in detention facilities have the tools needed to do their jobs safely. I urge you to reject the proposal to phase out OC spray and instead advocate for comprehensive reforms that prioritize robust training, transparent oversight, and rehabilitation programs to support our youth. Please represent National City's interests by ensuring these facilities remain safe and effective environments for all involved.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I look forward to your leadership in fostering solutions that balance safety and justice. Please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED] if you have any questions or wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Victor Hernandez