

**CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
EXHIBIT/DOCUMENT LOG**

MEETING DATE & AGENDA NO. 10/19/2021 #3

STAFF DOCUMENTS (Numerical)

| No. | Presented by: | Description: |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Staff Presentation | 28 page attachment |

2

3

4

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS (Alphabetical)

| No. | Presented by: | Description: |
|-----|---------------|--------------|
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A

B

C

D

E

F

G

Item 3:

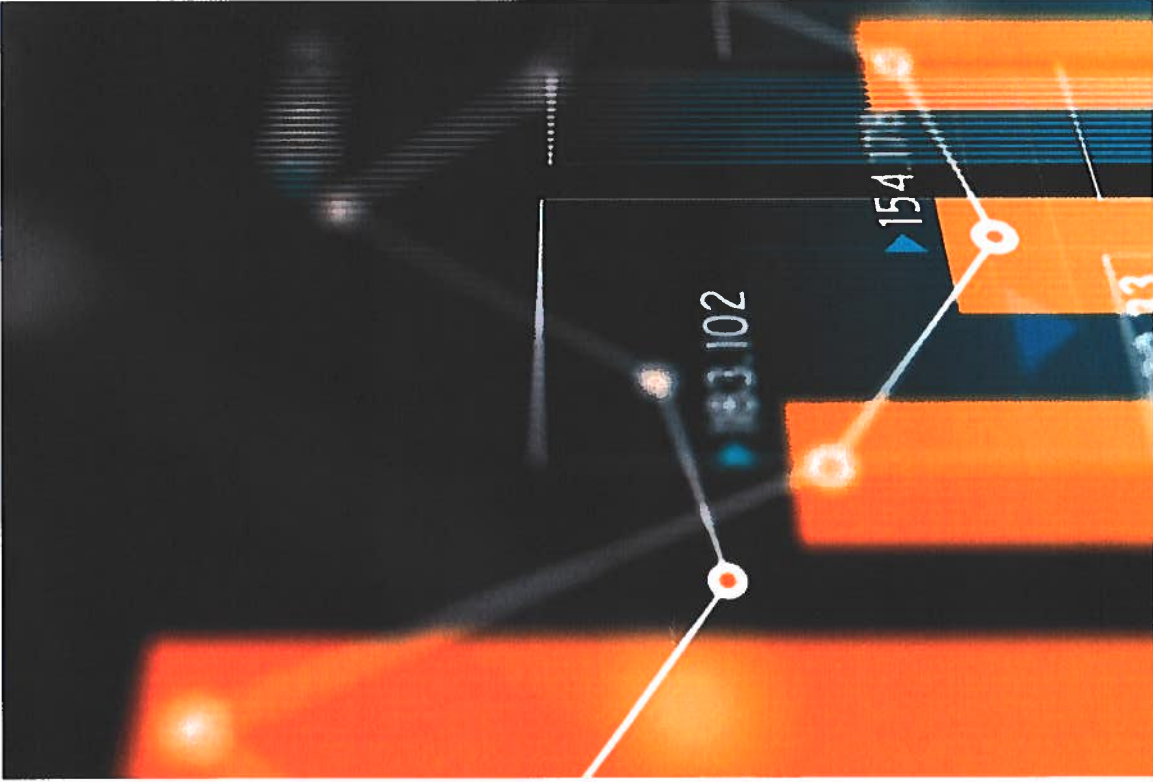
A Data-driven Approach To Protecting Public Safety,
Improving And Expanding Rehabilitative Treatment And Services,
And Advancing Equity Through Alternatives To Incarceration:
Building On Lessons Learned During The COVID-19 Pandemic

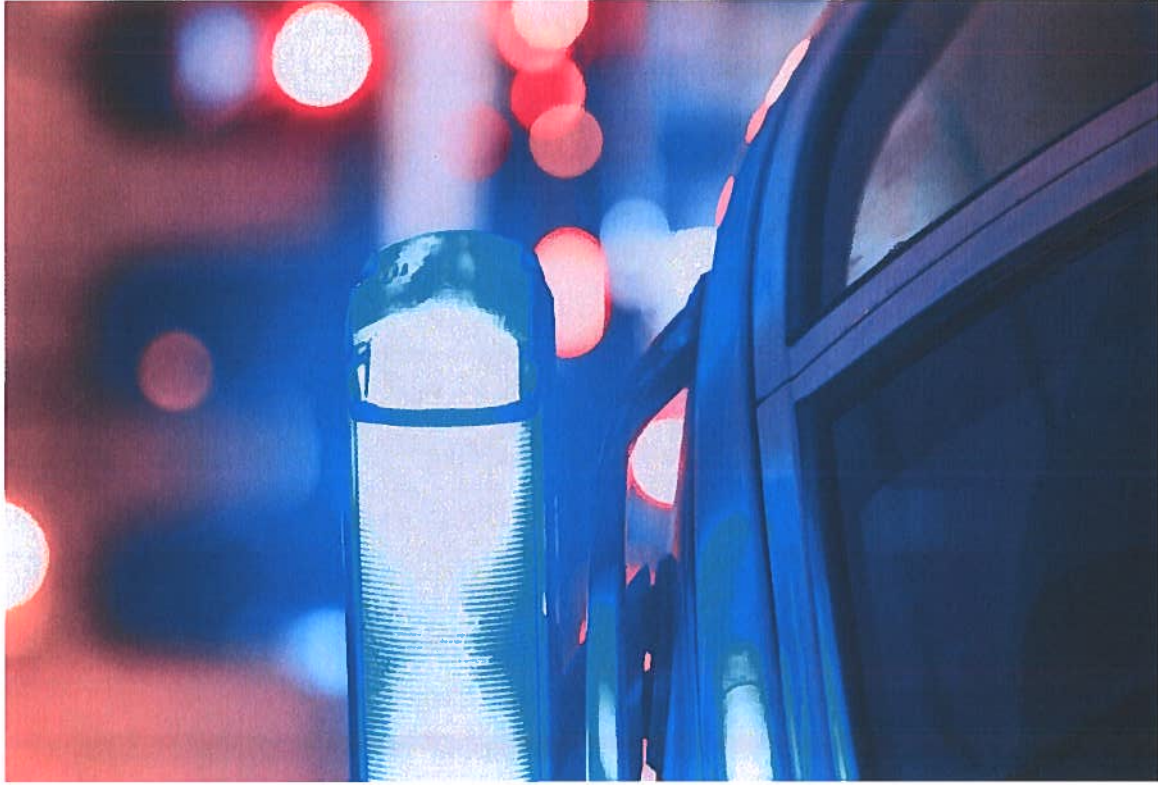


County of San Diego
October 19, 2021

Data-Driven Public Safety Overview

- Authorizing the study of incarceration and law enforcement data from the COVID-19 pandemic to adopt a data-driven approach to public safety that addresses the root causes of homelessness, mental and behavioral health crises, and other social issues without relying on jails as our first line response.





Challenge: Jails as First-Line Response

- Jail is often used as a first line response to:
 - Public health problems
 - Poverty
 - Substance use
- People struggling with mental health have died in local jails.
 - 10-year average of 74.8 suicides per 100,000 daily jail population in San Diego County
- Investigation of San Diego County in-custody deaths opened by State Assembly Joint Legislative Audit Committee



Challenge: Disparate Impacts, Unintended Consequences

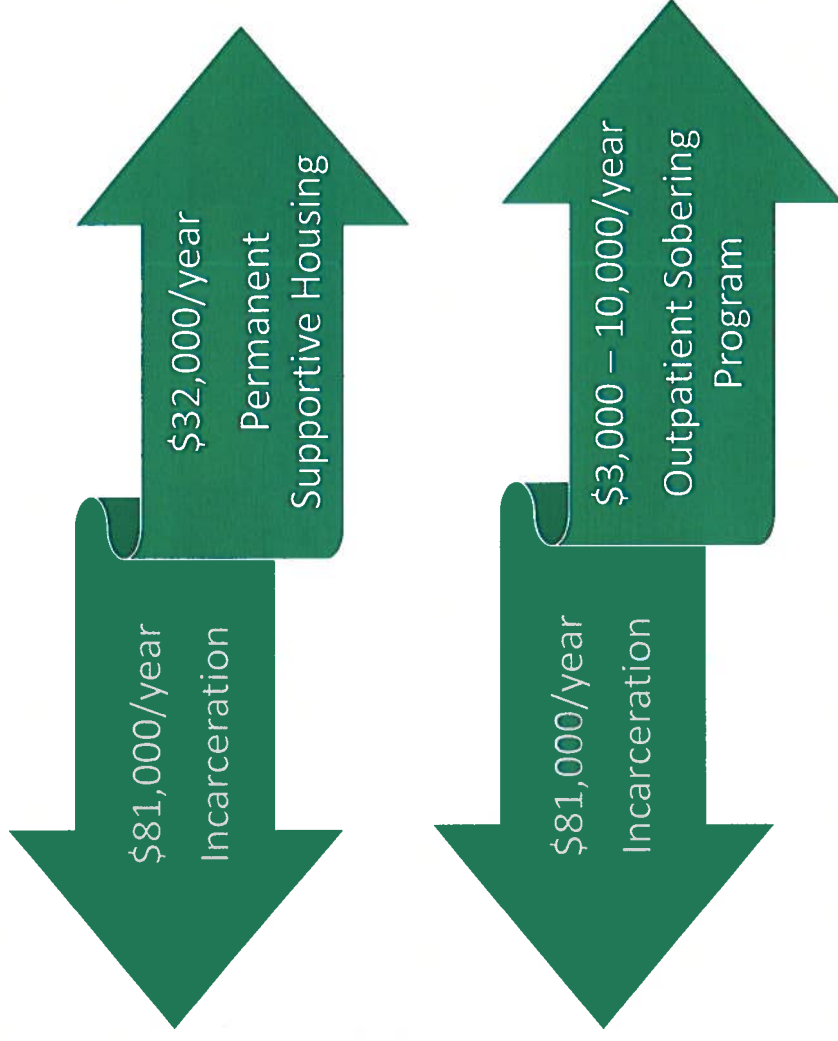
- People of color, people with disabilities, and people experiencing poverty are disproportionately incarcerated
 - Black people are 3.6 times more likely to be in local jails than white people nationwide (Vera Institute, Prison Policy Initiative)
 - People who are incarcerated are four times as likely to have a disability compared to the nonincarcerated population (Bureau of Justice Statistics)
 - Criminalization of social problems experienced by many people living in poverty (like homelessness, mental illness, and drug or alcohol problems) perpetuates racial inequity and poverty across generations (Institute for Research on Poverty)
- Even two days in jail can result in more, not less, future contact with the criminal justice system (Stanford Law Review)



Challenge: Major Service Gaps in Alternatives to Incarceration

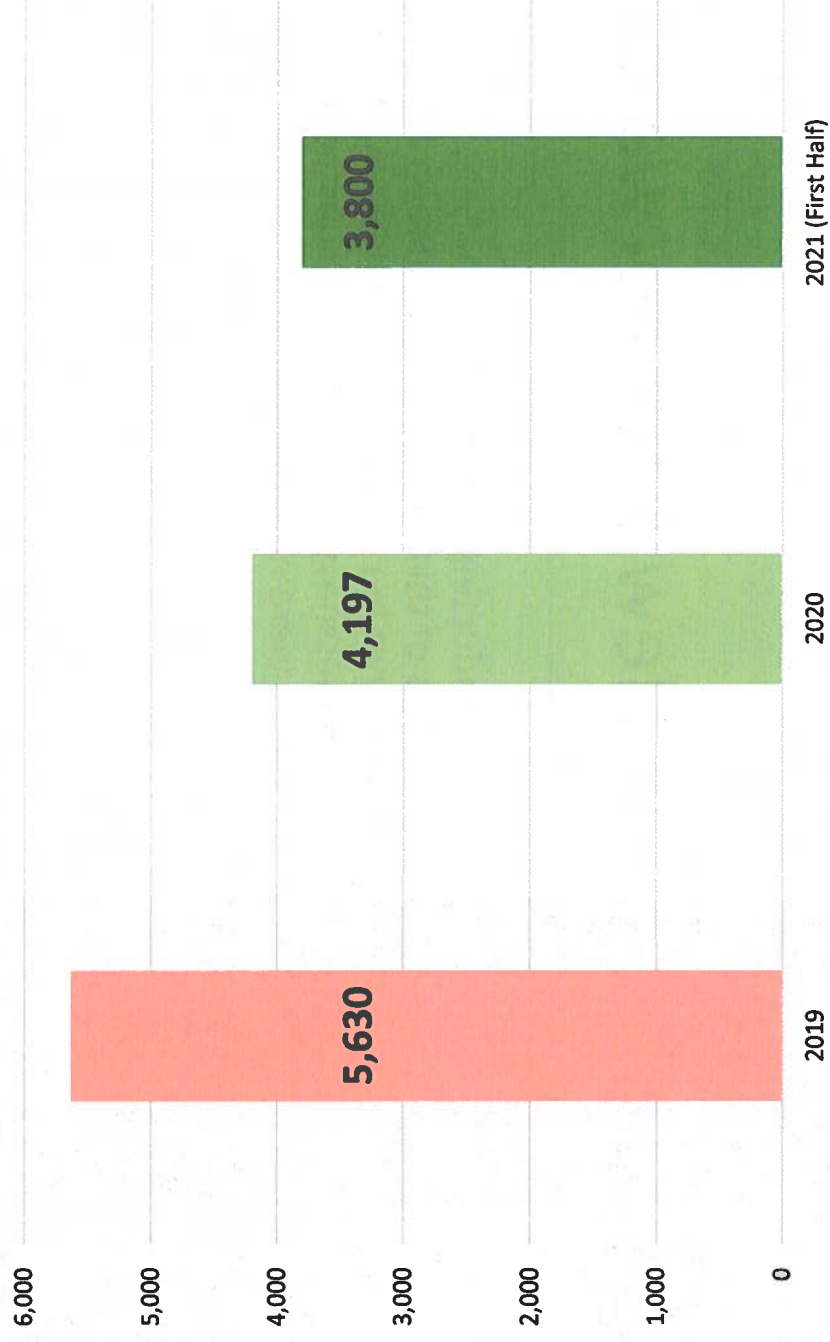
- Urgent need for increased access to a range of harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services across San Diego County. Example:
 - 3,971 unsheltered homeless individuals in 2020.
 - Only 800 inpatient psychiatric beds, over 90% utilization rate
- Connecting people to community-based services can:
 - Save taxpayer money
 - Promote better outcomes for individuals
 - Enhance community safety
- Appropriate community treatment isn't just morally right, it's fiscally responsible

There Are More Effective & Fiscally Responsible Ways To Address Root Causes Of Homelessness & Behavioral Health



San Diego County Jail Population: Pre-Pandemic vs. Pandemic

Average Daily Jail Population by Year

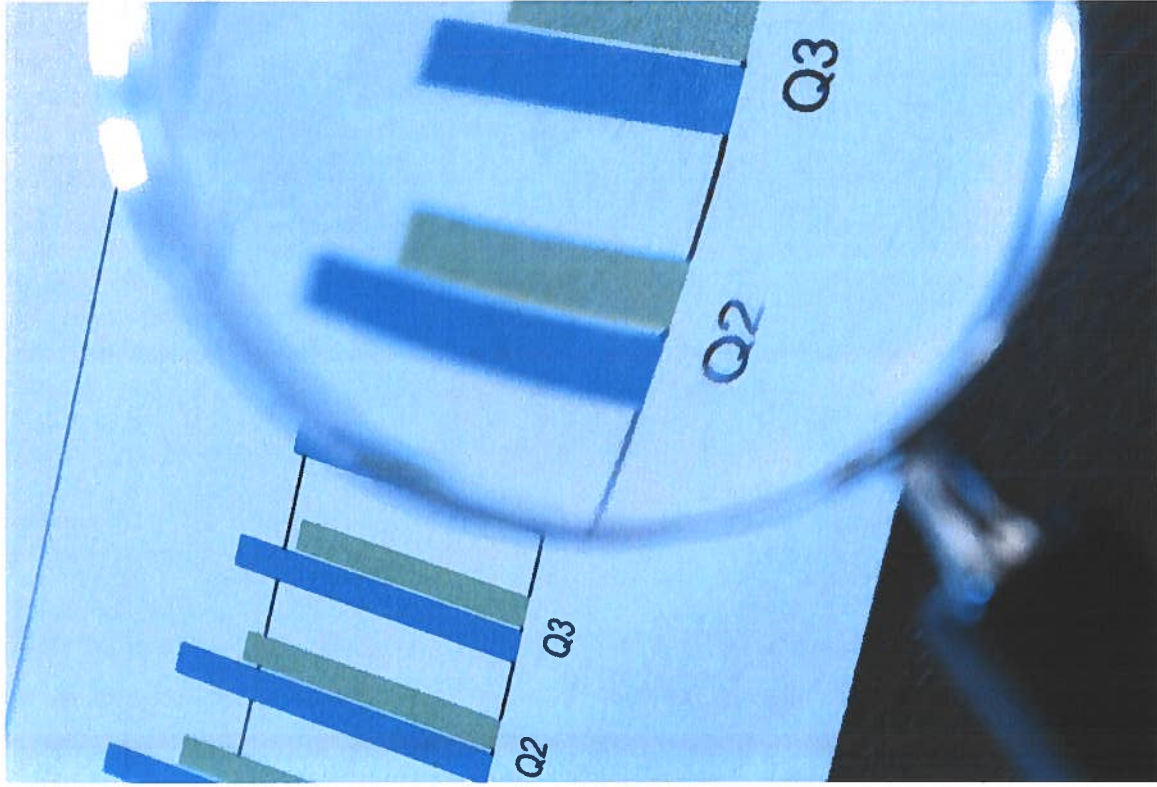


Source: District Attorney's Office



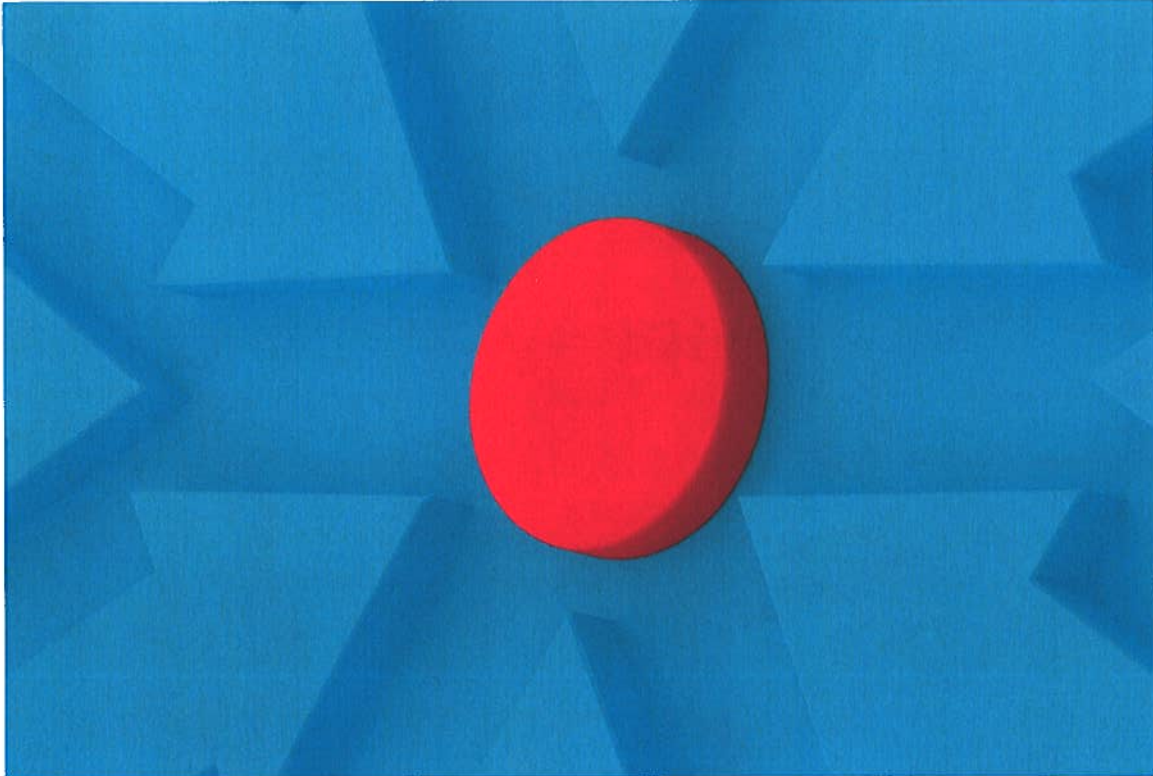
A New Path Forward

- By conducting a data-driven analysis, we can explore the effects of this smaller jail population and identify service gaps that became apparent when people experiencing homelessness, mental health, substance use, and other issues were no longer booked into jail.



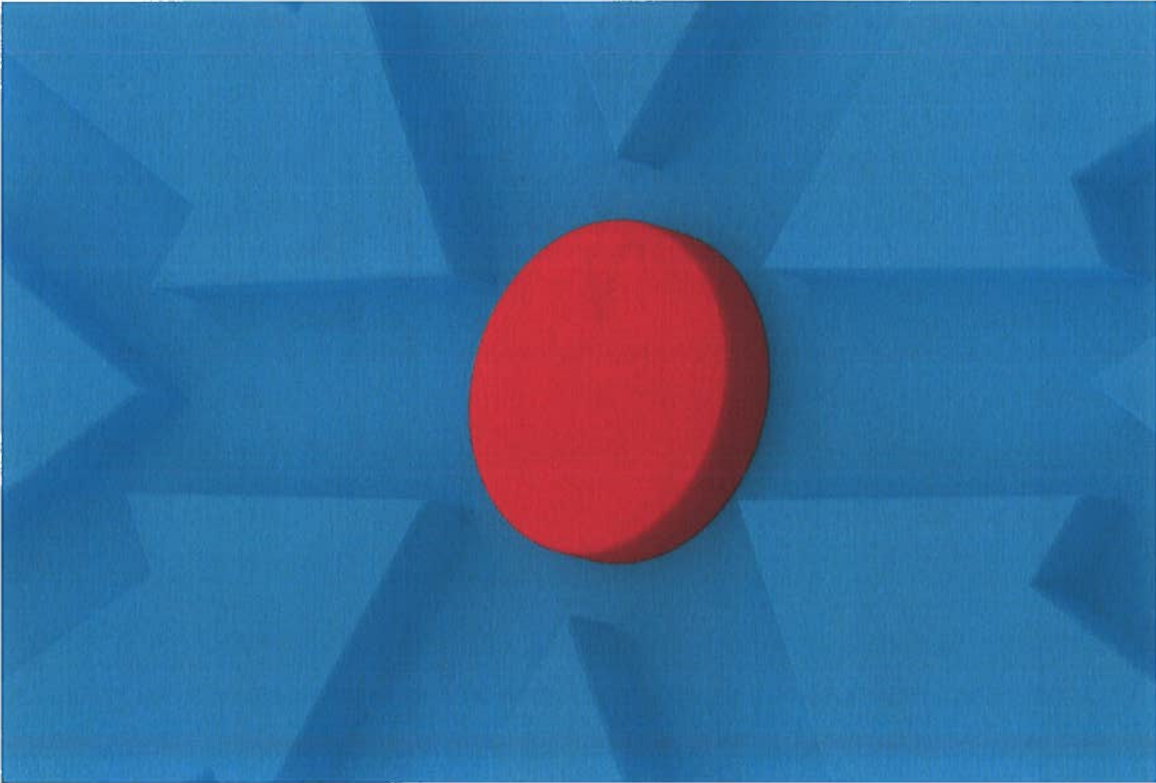
Approach

- **Conduct an empirical analysis**
 - Data from 2018 to present to ensure policy recommendations are based on evidence.
- **Perform a “gap analysis”**
 - Identify holes in current treatments, facilities, and programs that could be bridged to better serve the community as an alternative to incarceration.
- **Develop policy recommendations**
 - Best practices to safely keep jail populations at reduced levels by investing in alternatives to incarceration for people who do not pose a public safety threat.
- **Analyze costs, savings, and long-term fiscal impacts**
 - Determine where to invest in the future to support the data-driven recommendations.
- **Recommend candidates for jail diversion programs**
 - Could include individuals without a home, people struggling with drug use and mental health challenges, and youth or young offenders.
- **Focus on disproportionately represented individuals**
 - Youth or young adults, LGBTQ2IA+ individuals, disabled individuals, and communities of color including Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian American, and Pacific Islander.



Four Requested Actions

1. Direct Chief Administrative Officer to contract with independent consultant(s) to **conduct research, gather stakeholder input, and conduct working groups and open community forums**, and return to the Board with a data-driven analysis on how the use of jails changed from 2018 (pre-COVID) versus present — with a focus on identifying policy interventions that would most effectively, safely, and permanently reduce San Diego County jail populations — and also **return with comprehensive recommendations for short- and long-term actions and investments to expand access to alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety risk.**
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to contract with independent consultant to **analyze costs, savings, and long-term fiscal impacts** to Public Safety Group, Health and Human Services Administration, and other aspects of County operations by shifting County approach to public safety to priorities “safety through services” and evidence-based alternatives to incarceration.



Four Requested Actions

3. **Approve and authorize a Request for Information, then a Request for Proposal, then awarding contract(s) to conduct research, analysis, and delivery of report(s) as outlined in Recommendations 1 and 2.**
4. **Direct Chief Administrative Officer to solicit recommendations and convene stakeholder meetings — including from public safety partners; health and human services leadership; local community-based re-entry, alternatives to incarceration, and recidivism experts; criminal justice reform advocates; and Supervisors — regarding interventions that would most effectively and safely reduce San Diego County jail populations, and return with recommendations.**

Next Steps

Chief Administrative Officer report-back

- February 8th, 2022: Preliminary Report — Analysis and recommendations that could be adopted and implemented in the FY 2022-2023 budget

Chief Administrative Officer & Independent Consultant report backs

- March 15th, 2022: Preliminary Report — Analysis and recommendations that could be adopted and implemented in the FY 2022-2023 budget
- May 24th, 2022: Initial Interim Report and Recommendations
- October 25th, 2022: Draft Comprehensive Report and Recommendations
- February 1st, 2023: Final Comprehensive Report — Recommendations that could be adopted and implemented in the FY 2023-2024 budget, five-year plan, and subsequent budget cycles



Thank you

Thank you to the community groups, justice system reform experts, public safety experts, racial justice advocates, and healthcare, behavioral health, and homelessness service providers who contributed to this transformative multiyear initiative that will move our county forward.



San Diego County Sheriff's Department

William D. Gore, Sheriff



Kelly A. Martinez
Undersheriff

October 14, 2021

Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer
1600 Pacific Highway
Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Supervisor Lawson-Remer,

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department supports the board letter entitled "A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC."

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is uniquely positioned to have a firsthand view of incarceration and alternatives to incarceration and supports a data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

The board letter Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward is a data driven approach to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat. If there are opportunities to provide community-based or alternatives to incarceration that will not put communities at risk, I support an opportunity to identify them.

It is important to use data and evidence to identify individuals who can be treated for behavioral health issues outside of the jail setting. San Diego County does not currently have enough alternatives to custody and/or pre-trial options that will keep low-level offenders in a supervised community setting versus jail.

Several changes were instituted in 2019 to facilitate early jail releases, emergency zero bail, and altered booking acceptance criteria. These changes were made during a pandemic to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the jail. It is important to understand how these changes affected public safety and if individuals who benefited from these changes were better served by alternatives to custody.

Charges such as drug possession or paraphernalia have less of an effect on overall public safety but are still a concern due to the nature of obtaining and being under the influence of drugs. An alternative to jail for these individuals could provide a viable option to help individuals with substance use disorder while still providing for safe communities.

The ability to use evidence and data to better understand who could be diverted from incarceration to a community-based alternative, with a strong emphasis on community safety is my reason for supporting this board letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William D. Gore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" being the most prominent part.

William D. Gore, Sheriff



15 October 2021

Interfaith Community Services supports the board letter entitled “A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.”

Because Interfaith Community Services are uniquely positioned to have a firsthand view of incarceration and alternatives to incarceration, Interfaith Community Services whole-heartedly support Terra Lawson-Remer’s data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

The jail population in San Diego averages about 5,630 people a day. Many of those incarcerated are poor, homeless, mentally ill or have a substance use problem, and keeping them in jail, does not make us safer nor does it best serve this population. Inappropriate and ineffective incarceration of individuals who do not pose a public safety threat imposes significant costs on society, taxpayers, individuals, and families.

Statewide and locally, taxpayers spend \$81,000 a year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness versus \$32,000 a year for permanent supportive housing in the community, or \$3,000 to \$10,000 a year for an outpatient sobering program. It is time we look into more effective ways to address incarceration in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a data driven board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat.

Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through data-informed, evidence-based measures. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the traditional justice system, including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development; reexamining enforcement practices and the money bail system; and creating the infrastructure to divert people to alternatives to incarceration. These approaches help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation, and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. We have an opportunity to create alternative treatments and services that can address the root causes of justice system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and humane way.

Interfaith's Supportive Services provide access to comprehensive programs that empower the community to lead independent and thriving lives. This includes legal clinics and homeless court - a special Superior Court session for homeless defendants or defendants at risk of being homeless to resolve misdemeanor offenses, minor infractions, traffic issues and outstanding warrants. Clients are

connected with advocates to help them prepare for the court hearing. Fines are cleared based on achievements and accomplishments that lead to self-sufficiency. Through assessments, case management, supportive services, housing, rehab, and employment Interfaith ensures community members reach their full potential making the common denominator for our clients - self-sufficiency.

Interfaith requests that the San Diego County Board of Supervisors support agenda items #3 and #4 in order to better study the impact of reducing incarceration and identify alternatives to incarceration which can better address mental health, substance use, and homelessness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg Anglea', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Greg Anglea
Chief Executive Officer
Cohn Family Executive Director Chair



HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION of San Diego & Imperial Counties

October 18, 2021

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

Re: Item #3: *A Data-Driven Approach to Protecting Public Safety, Improving and Expanding Rehabilitative Treatment and Services, and Advancing Equity Through Alternatives to Incarceration: Building on Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors:

The Hospital Association of San Diego & Imperial Counties (HASD&IC) supports Item #3, *A Data-Driven Approach to Protecting Public Safety, Improving and Expanding Rehabilitative Treatment and Services, and Advancing Equity Through Alternatives to Incarceration: Building on Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

Over the past eight years, the HASD&IC San Diego Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) have consistently identified behavioral health as a top community need. Challenges accessing behavioral health services have grown more acute every year. In 2019, the types of care that were identified as most difficult to access included substance abuse facilities, urgent care services for crisis situations, transitional programs, and services (post-acute care services).¹ In a separate Behavioral Health Analysis, hospitals identified 13 critically needed services such as adolescent rehabilitation services, crisis residential treatment programs, intensive outpatient programs, licensed board and cares (with augmented support), detox beds, day treatment programs or partial hospitalization programs, and structured independent living.²

HASD&IC strongly supports the research focus on the behavioral health needs of the jail population and the requested analysis to identify “what additional services and supports are needed in the community to support people in non-custodial settings and reduce justice involvement. These supports might include community resources or law enforcement services, supportive housing, mental or behavioral health facilities, substance use facilities or programs, or other entities that we could refer/take people to instead of jail.”

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a data driven board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze its current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat. No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis and no one should be dropped off at a hospital emergency department just because there are no readily available behavioral health services in the community.

5575 Ruffin Road, Suite 225, San Diego, CA 92123

This board letter creates a process to consider alternative treatments that promote public safety in a more cost-effective and humane way. The resulting research and recommendations will allow the County Board of Supervisors to prioritize funding services that are proven to reduce the risk of incarceration for people with chronic health conditions and behavioral health conditions.

Please feel free to contact me (dalexiou@hasdic.org) or my staff Lindsey Wade (lwade@hasdic.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Dimitrios Alexiou, FACHE
President & CEO

¹ HASD&IC 2013, 2016 & 2019 Community Health Needs Assessments <https://hasdic.org/chna-assessment/>

² HASD&IC Behavioral Health Analysis <https://hasdic.org/wp-content/uploads/HASDIC-BH-Analysis-Nov-2018-rev.pdf>



LOCAL 221

Service Employees International Union, CLC

Oct. 18, 2021

To: Chair Nathan Fletcher and the Board of Supervisors
From: Crystal Irving, President, SEIU Local 221

RE: SEIU 221 Support for Item#3: A Data-Driven Approach to Protecting Public Safety, Improving and Expanding Rehabilitative Treatment and Services and Advancing Equity Through Alternatives to Incarceration: Building on Lessons Learned During The COVID-19 Pandemic."

The Service Employees International Union, Local 221, representing health care workers in San Diego County Jails, is an advocate for safer incarceration and alternatives to incarceration. SEIU Local 221 supports Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer's proposed data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

Our members bear witness every day to the unsafe conditions in the jails for both detainees and the essential health care staff whose mission is to care for them. Inadequate staffing levels, a lack of adherence to medically driven protocols and low morale continue to be obstacles to safety. Our members dedicate themselves to facing the impossible task of trying to make this system work without adequate staffing, but it's clear that our vision of public safety needs to change dramatically, and we welcome this approach as an important step forward.

The jail population in San Diego averages more than 5,600 people a day. Many of those incarcerated are poor, homeless, mentally ill or have a substance use problem. Keeping them in jail does not make us safer nor does it best serve this population. Too often jail is the response to issues that are caused by public health problems, poverty or substance use – falling disproportionately on the poor, people with mental and behavioral health challenges, diverse communities of color including disabled LGBTQ2IA+, Black, Latinx, Indigenous, AAPI and people experiencing homelessness. Besides the human cost, taxpayers spend \$81,000 a year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness versus \$32,000 a year for permanent supportive housing in the community. It is time we investigate more effective ways to address incarceration in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat. Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through data-informed, evidence-based measures. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the

San Diego ~ Imperial Counties

4004 Kearny Mesa Road ~ San Diego, CA 92111 ~ (858) 560-0151 ~ Fax (858) 560-1299



traditional justice system. These approaches help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Instead, we should invest in resources and staffing to create alternative treatments and services that can address the root causes of justice-system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and – more importantly – a more humane way.

We urge the board to support this proposal.



SAN DIEGO COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER'S ASSOCIATION

451 "A" Street, Suite 1100 | San Diego, CA 92101

Email: sdpublicdefendersassociation@gmail.com

September 27, 2021

We are the employee union that represents over 200 criminal defense attorneys in the San Diego Public Defender's Office. We support the board letter entitled **"A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC."**

Because public defenders are uniquely positioned to have a firsthand view of incarceration and alternatives to incarceration, the San Diego County Public Defender's Association and its members whole-heartedly support Terra Lawson-Remer's data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

The jail population in San Diego averages about 5,630 people a day. Many of those incarcerated are poor, homeless, mentally ill or have a substance use problem, and keeping them in jail does not make us safer nor does it best serve this population. Inappropriate and ineffective incarceration for non-violent offenses imposes significant costs on society, taxpayers, individuals, and families.

Statewide and locally, taxpayers spend \$81,000 a year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness versus \$32,000 a year for permanent supportive housing in the community, or \$3,000 to \$10,000 a year for an outpatient sobering program. It is time we look into a more effective ways to address incarceration in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a data driven board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders.

Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through data-informed, evidence-based measures. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the traditional justice system, including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development; reexamining enforcement practices and the money bail system; and creating the infrastructure to divert people to alternatives to incarceration. These approaches help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation, and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. We have an opportunity to create alternatives treatments and services that can address the root causes of justice system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and human way.

Public defenders are frequently looking for alternatives to custody for their clients. Having data to support this effort, programs to place clients and community support for these efforts would make our jobs much more fruitful and rewarding. At the end of the day, we want to help our clients. This would assist immensely in achieving our desired goals of being the best advocates for our clients.

Respectfully,

The San Diego County Public Defender's Association

October 18, 2021

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors:

We write to express our support for Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer's board letter entitled "A Data-Driven Approach to Protecting Public Safety, Improving and Expanding Rehabilitative Treatment and Services, and Advancing Equity Through Alternatives to Incarceration: Building on Lessons Learned During the Covid-19 Pandemic."

San Diegans deserve to live in communities that are safe, healthy and thriving. A reliance on incarceration policies does not make our communities safer, in fact such policies are dangerous and ineffective. Our County must confront and divest from racist systems of policing and incarceration while creating networks of care for our communities.

The approach outlined in Supervisor Lawson-Remer's letter offers an opportunity for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration. We must also continue to identify alternative approaches to improve the health and well-being of all San Diego communities. The reductions in the jail population during the pandemic, while insufficient to protect those who remain inside from COVID-19, show that mass incarceration — with its tremendous societal and monetary costs — is not only unnecessary, but also horrifically damaging, especially to people of color and low-income communities. This is true not only in San Diego, but in jails and prisons across the country.

As we enter a new phase in this pandemic, it is critical that we do not allow our policing, jail admissions and prison sentencing systems to return to business as usual. We must end the criminalization of poverty and mental health illness, mass incarceration, and the endless construction of jails and prisons to lock up more people, disproportionately people of color.

COVID-19 showed us that we can quickly change even our most ingrained habits and behaviors when the need is urgent. The mass incarceration crisis has been destroying our communities for decades, but the pandemic made its depravity and senselessness impossible to ignore. We are faced with an opportunity and a mandate: We must apply the same urgency to ending our mass incarceration crisis that we applied to keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe during the last year.

For these reasons we support this board letter as another step to create a society that welcomes and meets the needs of everyone. We urge this board to vote in favor of adopting a data-driven approach to public safety to find alternatives to incarceration and to halt expansions and upgrades to jails; instead, we need the County to invest in existent and new initiatives that provide care for our communities.

Sincerely,

Christie Hill

ACLUF-SDIC Deputy Advocacy Director



**FIGHTING FOR
WORKERS AND
OUR COMMUNITIES**

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October 12, 2021

Re: A data-driven approach to protecting public safety, improving and expanding rehabilitative treatment and services, and advancing equity through alternatives to incarceration: building on lessons learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors:

I am writing today to urge your support for a data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody. UDW is fully committed to the pursuit of social justice, and no one should go to jail just because they are poor, homeless, or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. We have an opportunity to address the root causes of justice system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and humane way.

Keeping poor, homeless, or mentally ill individuals who do not pose a public safety threat in jail does not make us safer, nor does it best serve this population. Instead, it imposes significant costs on society, taxpayers, individuals, and families. And it further exacerbates issues of mental illness and creates debt and poverty traps.

Statewide and locally, taxpayers spend \$81,000/year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness, versus \$32,000/year for permanent supportive housing in the community, or \$3,000 to \$10,000/year for an outpatient sobering program. We must find a more effective way to address incarceration in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer's board letter calls on San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat.

We can safely reduce the number of people in jails through data-informed, evidence-based measures, including investing in community-based resources outside of the traditional justice system, including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development; reexamining enforcement practices and the money bail system; and creating infrastructure to divert people to alternatives to incarceration. These tactics help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation, and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

UDW stands behind Supervisor Lawson-Remer's efforts, and we ask for your support on this board item.

Sincerely,

Doug Moore
Executive Director
United Domestic Workers of America/AFSCME Local 3930

10/11/2021

Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer
1600 Pacific Highway
Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer:

North County Lifeline supports the board letter entitled **"A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC."**

Because North County Lifeline ("Lifeline") are uniquely positioned to have a firsthand view of incarceration and alternatives to incarceration, Lifeline and its members whole-heartedly support Terra Lawson-Remer's data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

The jail population in San Diego averages about 5,630 people a day. Many of those incarcerated are poor, homeless, mentally ill or have a substance use problem, and keeping them in jail, does not make us safer nor does it best serve this population. Inappropriate and ineffective incarceration of individuals who do not pose a public safety threat non-violent imposes significant costs on society, taxpayers, individuals, and families.

Statewide and locally, taxpayers spend \$81,000 a year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness versus \$32,000 a year for permanent supportive housing in the community, or \$3,000 to \$10,000 a year for an outpatient sobering program. It is time we look into a more effective ways to address incarceration in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a data driven board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat.

Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through data-informed, evidence-based measures. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the traditional justice system, including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development; reexamining enforcement practices and the money bail system; and creating the infrastructure to divert people to alternatives to incarceration. These approaches help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation, and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. We have an opportunity to create alternative treatments and services that can address the root causes of justice system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and humane way.

Sincerely,



Don Stump
Executive Director
North County Lifeline



San Diego
Workforce
Partnership

Community • Collaboration • Careers

The San Diego Workforce Partnership supports the board letter entitled “**A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**”

Among the thousands of job seekers the San Diego Workforce Partnership serves each year, few face more severe challenges finding a job than those coming out of jail. In our work with justice-involved [youth](#) and [adults](#) we have seen first-hand the severe, long-term damage incarceration does to a person’s ability to get a job and achieve financial self-sufficiency. Justice-involved individuals face extreme discrimination in the labor market—discrimination that’s inseparably [intertwined with racism](#).

A [2012 SANDAG study](#) showed that stable employment is one of the three strongest factors driving desistance from crime among the region’s justice-involved individuals. We’ve seen firsthand [how lives are changed](#) when individuals with criminal pasts find stable employment. If we want to improve public safety in San Diego County, we need to take all available steps to secure employment for justice-involved individuals. For this reason, the San Diego Workforce Partnership whole-heartedly supports Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer’s data-driven approach to expanding alternatives to custody.

San Diego’s jail population averages about 5,630 people a day. Many of those incarcerated are poor, homeless, mentally ill or have a substance-use problem, and keeping them in jail does not address the underlying causes of crime or make us safer. Instead, incarceration of individuals who do not pose a public safety threat imposes significant costs on society, taxpayers, individuals, and families.

Statewide and locally, taxpayers spend \$81,000 a year to incarcerate someone with a mental health illness versus \$32,000 a year for permanent supportive housing in the community, or \$3,000 to \$10,000 a year for an outpatient sobering program. We must consider more effective and affordable ways to address poverty and public safety in our region.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer is bringing forward a data-driven board letter that will address the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system and explore alternatives to incarceration for individuals who do not pose a public safety threat.

Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through evidence-based reforms and interventions. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the traditional justice system, including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development; reexamining enforcement practices and the money bail system; and creating the infrastructure to divert people to alternatives to incarceration. These approaches help prevent harm in the community, support rehabilitation, and ensure that incarceration is used as a last resort.

No one should be going to jail just because they are homeless or experiencing a behavioral health crisis. We have an opportunity to create alternative treatments and services that can address the root causes of justice system involvement and promote public safety in a more cost-effective and humane way.

The San Diego Workforce Partnership is a 501c3 non-profit that serves as the region's local workforce development board and reaches thousands of employers and job seekers annually through its funded partners and direct services. Our mission is to empower job seekers to meet the current and future workforce needs of employers in San Diego County.

We are leaders in California's Prison-to-Employment Initiative, administering the Reentry Works program, collaborating with San Diego County Sheriff's and Probation departments to run career centers in [men's](#) and [women's](#) jails, producing [research](#) on employing formerly incarcerated job-seekers, even holding the region's first ever [job fair in a jail](#) and the [first in a state prison](#). Our goal is to provide evidence-based solutions that serve justice-involved individuals and local employers while improving public safety. The San Diego Workforce Partnership supports Supervisor Lawson-Remer's proposal to build an evidence-based approach toward alternatives to custody in order to build a stronger workforce in support of a safer community.

Sincerely,

Peter Callstrom
President & CEO
San Diego Workforce Partnership

The Center on Policy Initiatives supports the board letter entitled “A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION: BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.”

Our organization supports Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer’s board letter to examine how we can decrease rates of incarceration and expand alternatives to custody. The Center on Policy Initiatives understands the importance of investing in alternatives to incarceration as a way to create healthier communities through economic and racial justice for working families in the San Diego region. The history of racial injustice that has created economic inequalities among communities of color, is perpetuated and deepened by modern systems of mass incarceration that are funded and operated at the local level.

Research shows that the increased use of jails and prisons does not reduce crime. The carceral system disproportionately pursues convictions for and incarcerations of Black people and people of color. Individuals who are incarcerated through our carceral systems face a lifetime of significantly diminished earnings. Despite the ineffectiveness and inhumanity of incarceration, our County continues to invest nearly a billion of public dollars in systems of policing and incarceration every year. Rather than promoting public safety and providing individuals with the supportive services and interventions they need, the County is spending money on incarceration and a carceral system that harms community members and their families.

We have an opportunity to create alternative treatments and services that promote public safety in an effective and humane way. Communities across the country are working to safely reduce the number of people in jails through evidence-based measures. This includes investing in often underfunded community-based resources outside of the traditional carceral system including supportive services, counseling, treatment, and workforce development. Supervisor Lawson-Remer’s board letter addresses the need for San Diego County to analyze our current jail system so that we can responsibly explore alternatives to incarceration for our community residents.

It is time our County reexamined its priorities and its role in supporting residents’ ability to live, work and thrive.

Sincerely,

Anjleena Kour Sahni

Researcher and Policy Advocate

Center on Policy Initiatives