

**From:** [Erin Wood](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#); [Justin Cummings](#)  
**Subject:** agenda item #8, no to a "juvenile camp"  
**Date:** Sunday, February 23, 2025 11:21:47 AM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors,

My name is Erin Wood and I'm a resident of Santa Cruz, a graduate of UCSC, and a licensed acupuncturist working with Medi-Cal patients in the county.

I'm writing to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department. From my understanding, the probation proposal appears to rename a few cells in the Juvenile Hall to "Coastal Redwood Academy". This is deeply misleading, it is still juvenile detention. I am concerned that the "ranch camp" will lead to worse outcomes for youth in our county. Sending youth across the hall to a new cell where maybe the door opens more often is neither a real "step-down" in detention, nor is it appropriate for youth who have committed less serious offenses.

I believe that we should redirect any efforts and money to more fruitful support services and housing. What if we converted the whole facility to a non-locked community center that offers trauma-informed behavioral health for folks of all ages, perhaps housing for elders or veterans, a vocational resource center, a food pantry and dining room for communal meals, a garden, and whatever else the community wanted? We wouldn't have to invest in the surveillance and detention of our youth, friends, and neighbors. There is an open space, playing field, with volleyball court and basketball courts and wouldn't it be fabulous for more folks to be able to enjoy this place in the mountains? Stopping this vicious cycle of surveillance and incarceration could mean as a society, we could start investing in programs that actually heal our neighbors and youth and keep the entire community safe.

I also want to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any "step down" program for youth. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee; both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan for our system-

impacted youth. Eventually, we could transition to spending too much money on this outdated facility and leading to ways that lead to more productive and supportive futures for youth.

Thank you for considering my input,  
Erin Wood  
Westside Resident  
UCSC Graduate, Licensed Acupuncturist

**Herbal Wellness Check-Ins Virtually  
Monday & Wednesday Afternoons,  
Fridays All Day @12704 Hwy 9, Boulder Creek,  
in the heart of the Santa Cruz Mountains  
Tuesdays All Day at Branciforte Plaza at  
555 Soquel Avenue, Suite 260, [Center for Health](#)**

**From:** [Julia Gratton](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#); [Justin Cummings](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda line #8: No on Ranch Camp  
**Date:** Monday, February 24, 2025 7:19:05 AM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors,

My name is Julia Gratton. I grew up here in Santa Cruz County and came back to be close to my family and to make my life here after graduating college. I am writing to urge you to vote no on establishing Redwoods Coastal Academy at Juvenile Hall.

There is no good reason for establishing a Ranch Camp in Santa Cruz County. Youth are better served at home and through community based programs, and research shows that being incarcerated for even small amounts of time and even in low-security settings is bad for kids and leads to higher rates of recidivism. I am concerned that designating part of Juvenile Hall as a Ranch Camp would lead to more youth being incarcerated in Santa Cruz County and for longer terms. And I simply don't see any good reason for a Ranch Camp, since any youth eligible to be stepped down to a Ranch Camp would also be eligible to be stepped down to an individual plan for a Less Restrictive Program than would allow them to be at home and in their community.

Santa Cruz County prides itself on having made major reductions in its juvenile hall population, becoming a model for other California counties. It's time to live up to that legacy by saying no to Redwoods Coastal Academy and investing instead in the local organizations working with youth in our communities.

Thank you for all your work, and please vote no on Redwoods Coastal Academy.

Sincerely,  
Julia Gratton

**From:** [Jill Schetter-Susskind](#)  
**To:** [Justin Cummings](#); [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on agenda item #8 for feb 25 meeting  
**Date:** Monday, February 24, 2025 1:05:21 PM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Justin and Board of Supervisors,

Thank you for taking the time to consider the most caring and effective options for local youth rehabilitation and reentry programs. I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department.

I currently live and operate a home preschool in District 3. As a parent, teacher and sibling to two brothers who as teens were placed in juvenile detention/rehabilitation programs that resulted in continuing trauma, incarceration and problems for decades, I am asking that you focus on the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) implementation to promote a more cost- and outcome-effective **"least restrictive program" (LRP) model**. Instead of continuing to use a carceral model – the proposed Redwood Coastal Academy "ranch camp" is not actually a camp but instead reclassifying certain cells at the current juvenile hall – I urge you to look at this as an opportunity where youth in our community can receive appropriate support as they transition back to their families, school and society and set them up for *long-term* success.

In addition, I would like to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any "step down" program for youth. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee; both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan for our system-impacted youth.

Sincerely,

Jill Schettler-Susskind

[REDACTED]

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**From:** [Debra Schneider](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** DO NOT approve the Probation Department's proposal for a "Ranch Camp" for youth in Santa Cruz County.  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 7:16:44 PM

---

**\*\*\*CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors:

My name is Debra Schneider and I'm a resident of Santa Cruz in Supervisorial District 3. I am a retired educator who worked with middle and high school students for 30 years.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department. As I understand it, the proposed "ranch camp" for juveniles merely renames a few cells in the Juvenile Hall to "Coastal Redwood Academy." This is misleading; it is still juvenile detention.

From my decades of work experience with youth, I know that young people are better served by a less restrictive program that keeps them at home or in a home-like setting and engages them in community activities and organizations.

Research reported by the National Bureau of Economic Research shows that "juvenile incarceration results in large decreases in the likelihood of high school completion and large increases in the likelihood of adult incarceration." California Senate Bill 823 directs that young people should be in the "least restrictive appropriate environment" with the goal being "to reduce and then eliminate racial and economic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions." I encourage Santa Cruz County Supervisors to contribute to that effort.

In addition, I want to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any "step down" program for youth. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee; both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan for our system-impacted youth that makes a real, substantive difference in circumstances and programming to support our youth.

Thank you for considering my input,  
Debra Schneider

**From:** [Tamar Ragir](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** Feb 25 Agenda item 8 comments on proposal from probation  
**Date:** Saturday, February 22, 2025 10:51:38 AM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors:

My name is Tamar Ragir and I'm a resident of Santa Cruz. I am also a high school teacher at an alternative high school called Delta. I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department.

From my understanding, the probation proposal appears to rename a few cells in the Juvenile Hall to "Coastal Redwood Academy". This is misleading; it is still juvenile detention. I am concerned that the "ranch camp" will lead to worse outcomes for youth in our county. Sending youth across the hall from SYTF to a new cell where maybe the door opens more often is neither a real "step-down" in detention, nor is it appropriate for youth who have committed less serious offenses. I have several students who were incarcerated at the juvenile hall in Felton. The experience of being incarcerated has been difficult to recover from. It makes a big difference if we can keep them at home or in a home like-setting.

This [research](#) referenced in a recent New York Times article indicates that even a short stay in detention decreases graduation rates and increases recidivism as adults. Young people will be better served by a less restrictive program that engages them in community activities and organizations while living at home if possible.

As you probably know, *CA Senate Bill 823 - Dept. of Juvenile Justice Realignment* calls for the "least restrictive appropriate environment" with the goal being to "reduce and then eliminate racial and economic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions." I'd love to see us, as a county, develop a more creative, less restrictive solution that better meets the requirements of the law and will better serve our young people.

In addition, I want to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any "step down" program for youth. I heard that the probation department requested input from system impacted families, but none of the impacted students I know or their families were contacted. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee. There are also many other community organizations focused on supporting youth like Barrios Unidos. All of these



committees and organizations and impacted youth and their families should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan.

Thank you for considering my input,  
Tamar Ragir



**From:** [Matt Nathanson](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** Item #8 on February 25 Agenda - Ordinance Establishing "Redwoods Coastal Academy"  
**Date:** Sunday, February 23, 2025 5:33:02 PM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Chairperson Hernandez and Board Members, Cummings, Martinez, De Serpa and Koenig:


I write to you as a Santa Cruz County resident in opposition to the proposal to create the euphemistically named "Redwoods Coastal Academy" in Juvenile Hall. The good idea in this proposal is to avoid sending youth from our county away to other counties to be incarcerated. The bad idea is to incarcerate these youth in the first place. You can call it an "Academy", but it is still Juvenile Hall. Much better to spend the financial and staff resources on alternate programming for youth who get arrested (mentoring programs, mental health and substance use treatment programs, academic and vocational education programs etc.).

I must confess I was surprised by the contents of the agenda packet itself for this item. While the agenda describes item #8 a "*report on community outreach on establishing a juvenile camp program at Juvenile Hall*", I don't see much information on what was learned from talking to members of the community. I do know that there are significant voices in our community who are opposed to this approach and I urge you to listen to MILPA, SURJ, and other organizations. There is solid, evidence based research that shows how even brief periods of incarceration for youth have enormous negative effects going forward, increasing the likelihood of re-incarceration in the future, decreasing the likelihood of high school completion, etc.)

Please do not move forward with this proposal but focus on other options that don't involve looking these youth up in Juvenile Hall, by whatever name you call it.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Nathanson, Public Health Nurse

 Santa Cruz CA 95060

**From:** Clare Bathum  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors; Fifth District](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Juvenile Camp Program  
**Date:** Monday, February 24, 2025 11:14:49 AM

---

\*\*\*\*CAUTION: This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors,

My name is Clare Bathum and I'm a resident of Brookdale.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department.

From my understanding, the probation proposal appears to rename a few cells in the Juvenile Hall to "Coastal Redwood Academy". This is misleading; it is still juvenile detention. I am concerned that the "ranch camp" will lead to worse outcomes for youth in our county. Sending youth across the hall to a new cell where maybe the door opens more often is neither a real "step-down" in detention, nor is it appropriate for youth who have committed less serious offenses.

Research <<https://www.nber.org/papers/w19102>> indicates that even a short stay in detention decreases graduation rates and increases recidivism as adults. Young people will be better served by a less restrictive program that keeps them at home or in a home-like setting and engages them in community activities and organizations.

In fact, CA Senate Bill 823 - Dept. of Juvenile Justice Realignment calls for the "least restrictive appropriate environment" with the goal being to "reduce and then eliminate racial and economic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions."

In addition, I want to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any "step down" program for youth. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee; both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan for our system-impacted youth.

Thank you for considering my input,

Clare Bathum

**From:** [Luisa Magarian](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** Reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system  
**Date:** Friday, February 21, 2025 9:27:43 AM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Supervisor Cummings,

I'm a resident of Santa Cruz, an auntie of two young kids at Bayview, and a graduate of Santa Cruz high school in the 90s. I've worked managing youth programs in the past.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop any consideration of the "ranch camp" proposed by the county probation department. I believe we can do better for the youth and for our community, and that doing so is imperative.

From my understanding, the probation proposal appears to rename a few cells in the Juvenile Hall to "Coastal Redwood Academy". This is misleading; it is still juvenile detention. I am concerned that the "ranch camp" will lead to worse outcomes for youth in our county. Sending youth across the hall to a new cell where maybe the door opens more often is neither a real "step-down" in detention, nor is it appropriate for youth who have committed less serious offenses.

[Research](#) indicates that even a short stay in detention decreases graduation rates and increases recidivism as adults. Young people will be better served by a less restrictive program that keeps them at home or in a home-like setting and engages them in community activities and organizations.

In fact, *CA Senate Bill 823 - Dept. of Juvenile Justice Realignment* calls for the "least restrictive appropriate environment" with the goal being to "reduce and then eliminate racial and economic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions."

In addition, I want to see the probation department engage more deeply with the community in creating any “step down” program for youth. I understand that we have the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and a related 823 subcommittee; both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process for developing a plan for our system-impacted youth.

Thank you for your consideration,

Luisa

**From:** [Leslie Potenzo](#)  
**To:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**Subject:** Vote NO on CAMP Designation-Yes to Community Based LRP-Leading to Better Outcomes  
**Date:** Monday, February 24, 2025 11:49:53 AM

---

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Supervisors,

My name is Leslie Potenzo and I live in Soquel. I have lived in Santa Cruz County for 35 years and I am a small business owner. I have long been working with numerous local organizations on the issues of Social and Racial Justice and Criminal Justice oversight.

I am writing to urge you to vote **NO** on the Probation Department proposal to designate the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall as a CAMP facility. (Agenda Item 8)

Your decision with this vote presents a significant opportunity for Santa Cruz County and the Probation Department to be leaders in the Juvenile Justice System by committing to further implement the goals and directions of *SB 823 - Dept. of Juvenile Justice Realignment* which calls for the “least restrictive appropriate environment” with the goal being to “reduce and then eliminate racial and economic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing **community-based responses and interventions.**”

An intent of SB823 is to use state funding previously used for confinement and incarceration to instead promote a **more cost effective Least Restrictive Program** (LRP) where youth can receive appropriate support in a non-carceral setting such as at-home rehabilitative programs with wrap around services, as they transition back to their families, school and society.

Community based less restrictive programs (LRPs) can take various forms: Among others, Individual At home Rehabilitation Plans or Community Residential Programs, both with community based organizations’ wrap around programs/services.

Additionally, I believe we are underutilizing the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) and the SB 823 Subcommittee. Both of these community oversight committees should be engaged more deeply in the process of developing a Less Restrictive Program (LRP) plan for our youth. Additionally, I urge you to expand the membership of these committees to include additional community members and individuals with lived experience in the justice system. This is a step in furthering equity, one of the Board’s core values. These committees can also play a role in the development of a comprehensive plan for the more vulnerable youth of Santa Cruz County. Let’s put our

collective care and wisdom towards real support and prevention strategies.

Let's stop doing "business as usual." You, the Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County have an opportunity to create and reimagine youth justice for the future. By centering care, accountability, and equity, you can create a system that genuinely supports the growth and potential of every young person.

Thank you for your consideration,

Leslie Potenzo

District 1