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6/4/2025

Board of Supervisors June 4th

I spoke yesterday about the difference in **starting pay for a Sheriff Deputy TRAINEE with nothing more than a High School Diploma who makes \$300 to \$2000 more than the starting pay for a Senior Mental health Client Specialist 1 with a master's or PhD AND 2 years experience.**

I asked you to reconsider our priorities.

I mentioned that some folks might say that the TRAINEE has a more dangerous job. But these sometimes very young- just out of High School- Deputies, once Trained, **carry guns. Mental Health care workers do not carry guns to defend themselves.**

When the Santa Cruz Police beat up a friend of mine- who is clearly a TRANS woman- and they took her bus that she was living in- so now she has to live in a tent- She called me for help.

You can be sure that she did NOT call the Sheriff FOR HELP. And she never will.

I am here on this second day of budget hearings again to ask you to STOP hiring more Law Enforcement with guns at too high a price and start paying a living wage for our health care workers AT ALL LEVELS- including those who take care of people in their homes for starvation wages- and often at some risk to themselves that the Sheriff Deputies only hear about sometimes.

Last year we were asking for a 24/7 walk in shelter. Yesterday we heard from the folks at the Behavioral Health Department saying there is NO Step down in our County's Continuum of Care. People are let out of 5150 or the jail with no where to go. Maybe it's time for that 24/7 walk in shelter. I know homeless folks who would be happy to run it. A 24/ 7 walk in shelter would help law enforcement by lowering recidivism.

PLEASE- IT IS TIME FOR US TO RE-EXAMINE OUR PRIORITIES