

From: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
To: [Agenda Management Support](#)
Subject: Item 8 comment_Chatham, L
Date: Monday, June 2, 2025 7:43:29 AM

From: Laura Chatham <laurachatahm@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2025 12:46 PM
To: Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Budget Input - Fund MHCAN; Invest in Prevention

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Dear Supervisors,

I urge you to be bold in your thinking about our budget. This is a time when people are losing access to healthcare, food security, and housing support due to federal cuts. You are under pressure to make even deeper cuts to these basic services. But we as a county can push back. I urge you to:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Fund our programs that are working now-
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Make cuts to incarceration and the over-policing of the Unhoused community. The tickets
8. that are written cost taxpayers for court time, police time, sometimes incarceration time- and they don't get paid anyway.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. If we could figure out how to get a living wage for low paid workers, many of our Homeless
13. folks would love to have a job that would pay the rent.
- 14.

The Neighborhood Justice program is an excellent example of an alternative to incarceration. It holds people accountable while bringing the community together to help meet each other's basic needs. Please be creative in thinking about how we can expand this program or develop similar programs to reduce the

number of people in our jails, and consider how the general funds can be used to maintain these invaluable programs. Reducing incarceration is a much better way to save money than reducing access to healthcare and social services.

Thank you for considering my opinion,

Sincerely,

Laura Chatham

District 5 (Scotts Valley)