

From: [Michael O'Connor](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Letter of support for MHCAN
Date: Thursday, May 1, 2025 11:08:51 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

May 1, 2025

Dear SC Board of Supervisors,

Chronic mental illnesses like depression and schizophrenia are often characterized by isolation, and the greatest suffering is felt in solitude.

As I care for patients with this exact situation, I know the impact of MHCAN.

To put it simply, it keeps people out of the emergency room and out of the hospital.

Just to give a rough view of the kind of support provided there, here are a few groups from the April Calendar of MHCAN;

- Schizophrenia support group
- Bipolar support group
- Peer Incarceration Trauma support group
- Anxiety and depression group
- AA meetings
- NA meetings

Will it save money to shutter this low threshold drop-in center for the most vulnerable (and let's face it, voiceless) community members of Santa Cruz?
Of course!

It will save money; in the same way it would save money not to do cancer screenings like colonoscopy or mammogram. These are costly routine procedures. Obviously, the price would be paid further down the road with chemo and radiation and funeral expenses.

It will save money in the same way it would save money to stop providing electricity to the traffic lights. That cost will be completely absorbed by the tow companies and ambulances.

It will save money in the same way that discontinuing house repairs like roof leaks would save money. Damage to the house may be significant, but hey, look at all the money we

saved on that roof!

There is an automatic shutoff safety valve for homes that use gas for heating and/or cooking. Most homeowners likely don't even know it's there. It's not free, it would save money to stop requiring its use. However, it is wise to want to prevent worse outcomes.

People who are suffering from the comorbidities of; often multiple psychiatric diagnoses, and homelessness, and physical health problems, are not going to disappear.

MHCAN has served, whether we realize it or not, as a safety valve for the Santa Cruz community.

To remove such a feature is, unwise.

Michael O'Connor, PMHNP

HSA Santa Cruz County



Santa Cruz CA 95060



From: [Michael O'Connor](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: RE: Letter of support for MHCAN
Date: Thursday, May 1, 2025 12:05:23 PM

PS,

I meant to include "Thank you" for all you do to care for the County.

And although I often use sarcasm, I truly mean that genuinely. It can't be easy in these times, and I never really liked the "us vs them" dichotomy, I'm sure you are feeling stress as well as the rest of us.

Sincerely
Michael O'Connor

From: paul
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Budget
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:49:29 AM

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

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Please restore funding for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

It is a small amount to pay for this extremely important and effective organization that helps so many people to reconstruct their lives after (or before) a debilitating mental health crisis. Think how much more it will cost our community if people don't have this lifeline, they will end up in the emergency room or in jail increasing costs to the county overall.

Sincerely,
Paul Andrade

Thanks so much!

From: [Michael Arenson](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Fund MHCAN
Date: Friday, May 2, 2025 5:09:26 PM

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This is a critically important resource in Santa Cruz, the services that they provide and the duration it's been here. Please find a way to fund this organization. Thank you
Michael Arenson

From: [Susan Kohen](#)
To: [Justin Cummings](#); [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Fund MHCAN
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 4:00:36 PM

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

Dear Supervisor Cummings and other Supervisors,

Please restore funding for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

MHCAN is an extremely important and effective organization that helps so many people to reconstruct their lives after (or before) a debilitating mental health crisis. Think how much more it will cost our community if people don't have this lifeline and have to go to the emergency room, or even worse, to the main jail instead. As you know, if they end up in jail, they may be held there for months and even years awaiting trial with no prospect of getting what is needed for recovery and healing.

Please do everything possible - that does not entail taking funds from other critical county programs that are providing essential services for your community - and keep this program alive.

Sincerely,
Susan Kohen
District 3

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Susan Kohen
she/her/her

"When we are taught that safety lies always with sameness, then difference, of any kind, will appear as a threat. When we choose to love we choose to move against fear - against alienation and separation. The choice to love is a choice to connect - to find ourselves in the other. " bell hooks- all about love

From: [Lin Florinda Colavin](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: FUNDING CUTS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 1:10:25 PM

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

Dear Board of Supervisors;

Please find a way to fund MHCAN and the other mental health services that are proposed to be cut. MHCAN provides much needed services to out most vulnerable population in Santa Cruz . I live close to MHCAN and I deeply appreciate that it is part of my neighborhood, because I can see that it serves community members who really need and use its services.

THANK YOU for all the time , effort, skill you bring to your work as County Supervisors. This is demanding and difficult work.

THANK YOU for being willing to take it on, especially now!!!!

in this very uncertain chaotic time we are living in. please find the funding to continue much needed mental health services : services such as MHCAN and mental health services both contract and county. These services are needed more than ever right now. i know the county has been hit hard, but please find a way to provide these services. I believe that you will find a way to keep these vital services.

Sincerely,

Lin Florinda Colavin

[REDACTED] SC, 95062

Board Member NAMI SCC

From: [Nita nita](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Funding MHCAN
Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:57:48 PM

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

Dear Supervisors,

Please restore funding for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

It is a small amount to pay for this extremely important and effective organization that helps so many people to reconstruct their lives after (or before) a debilitating mental health crisis. Think how much more it will cost our community if people don't have this lifeline and have to go to the emergency room or to jail instead.

Sincerely,
Nita Hertel

From: [Lacey Sverev](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:13:40 AM

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

Dear Supervisors,

I'm not sure which district I'm in, so I'm writing all of you.

Please restore funding for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

It is a small amount to pay for this extremely important and effective organization that helps so many people to reconstruct their lives after (or before) a debilitating mental health crisis. Think how much more it will cost our community if people don't have this lifeline, they will end up in the emergency room or in jail increasing costs to the county overall.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration, I appreciate each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

Lacey Sverev, [REDACTED] Santa Cruz CA 95060

From: caryn@ebold.com
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: MCHAN
Date: Thursday, May 8, 2025 5:17:48 PM

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MCHAN serves a vulnerable population that benefits from their services and hopefully the County will continue funding these valuable programs.

Caryn Simon
Formerly HOPE Services Marketing and Job Development
(1998-2008)
Santa Cruz CA

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Cynthia Menezes](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: MHCAN
Date: Friday, May 2, 2025 2:01:09 PM

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

I am emailing to ask that you find within the budget the ability to allocate funds to continue services for MHCAN. MHCAN has provided a safe place for me to be during a very difficult time in my life. Most recently my father was placed into hospice and given days to live. TJ was able to coordinate a ride to the Monterey area where my father was and i was able to see him before he passed away. Without the caring of the people and services of MHCAN I believe I may not have made it to see my father before he died.

The environment is safe, clean, friendly, and the staff are very helpful and encouraging. MHCAN provides a computer room where i can update my resume and look for employment, while filling out forms and researching housing and shelter options.

The cooks provide healthy, nourishing meals dailey that i have relied upon.

I ask that your relook at the budget options and please allocate funds to further services to MHCAN and the clients they serve.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Menezes

From: [Shauna Gunderson](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: MHCAN
Date: Friday, May 2, 2025 3:37:00 PM

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Dear Supervisor,

Please restore fundin for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

It is a small amount to pay for his extremely important and effective organizatio that helps so many people.

It will cost much more to our community if people don't have this lifeline and have to go to the ER.

Sincerely,

Shauna Gunderson

From: [Wendy Martin](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Cc: [Badillo David](#)
Subject: Mhcan
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:10:34 AM

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

Dear Supervisor,

Because of mhcan which I started going to in 2014 my life has changed. The tools I learned attending classes at Mhcan, I use on a daily basis.

I have lived in Santa Cruz my entire life. Third generation Santa Cruz resident.

My name is Wendy, and I'm 57 years old. Among many roles I play in life are— mom, girlfriend, sister, friend, aunt, daughter,artist, and Christian — one of the most significant is being someone living with mental illness.

My journey with mental health began early. At 26, I was diagnosed with what was then known as multiple personality disorder, now called dissociative identity disorder.

My journey continued, and in 2014, Telecare diagnosed me with PTSD and borderline personality disorder during my first visit.

It was at Telecare that I learned of MHCAN and from Telecare I immediately started attending MHCAN

Today, I manage anxiety and depression with daily medication.

Please do not close MHCAN as it is a jewel in Santa Cruz County

Thank you, sincerely Wendy Martin

From: [Lynette Mike](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: MHCAN
Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:48:30 PM

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

Board of supervisors of Santa Cruz County,

I urge you to do whatever you can to save this program.

I used to attend Grace Church that was on the same site and had active participation with clients that were in the program and the program was invaluable to the clients that they serve. In this uncertain time we need to take care of and look out for the needs of the most vulnerable population and this is a population that MHCAN serves.

For years it has been a safe space for those with mental health issues and it's a community is a home base for those that may not have a home or those that have no family support system. I urge you to do whatever you can to find the funding to keep this program open.

Respectfully,
Lynette Mike

From: [Karen Scholer](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Please restore funding for MHCAN
Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 9:45:22 AM

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Dear Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors,

Please restore funding for MHCAN in the County budget for this year.

It is a small amount to pay for this extremely important and effective organization that helps so many people to reconstruct their lives after (or before) a debilitating mental health crisis. Think how much more it will cost our community if people don't have this lifeline, they will end up in the emergency room or in jail increasing costs to the county overall.

Sincerely,
Karen Scholer


Los Gatos 95033

From: [Roland Saher](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Save MHCAN!
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:23:31 AM

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

Dear Members of the Board, I urge you strongly to keep the funding for the MHCAN! Ever since Reagan cut funding for mental health facilities way back in the seventies or eighties, the situation of thousands of people got worse, and we all witnessed much of it in the streets. Do not repeat this mistake!

Respectfully, Roland Saher

From: [Karen Kaplan](#)
To: [Board Of Supervisors](#)
Subject: Tues. May 6, 9AM Meeting: Save MHCAN
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:14:53 AM

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

Dear Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors:

RE: Tuesday, May 6 Meeting, 9:00 AM

County Government Center
701 Ocean Street, Room 525
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Email: BoardOfSupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov

The public may speak for 3 minutes during the "Oral Communications" period. Written communications received **before May 5, 5:00 PM** will be included in the agenda packet.

AGENDA: MHCAN - Mental Health Client Action Network

Please save and fund MHCAN.

The annual budget for MHCAN to keep operating is @ \$590,000.

Mental Health Client Action Network
1051 Cayuga Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95062
(831) 469-0462

MHCAN is an organization that provides important and effective support to people who suffer from mental health issues. Many are unhoused and desperately need the services that MHCAN provides.

The Santa Cruz Drop-In Center offers peer support. It is a clean and sober community center that welcomes all people diagnosed with mental health issues such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or depression. Addicts and alcoholics are welcome. Amenities include coffee, breakfast, lunch, kitchen use, computer and phone use, transportation, showers, laundry, resources for housing in sober living environments, recovery programs, art and music therapy, and more.

Although I have never been to MHCAN, I have met several people who have benefitted from their services.

MHCAN has relied on county funding for more than 20 years. According to MHCAN Executive Director Tyler Starkman, MHCAN may be forced to close without continued financial support.

If MHCAN closes, where will people with mental illness go?

Putting people in jail or sending them to a hospital would be much more costly!

Thank you for your immediate and urgent consideration to continue funding **MHCAN**.

Sincerely,

Karen Kaplan

Resident of Santa Cruz County Since 1974