

Date: November 3, 2020

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor McCowen

RE: Draft Measure B Strategic Plan

I am concerned that the Draft Measure B Strategic Plan ("the Plan") recommends \$1.3 million for purchase of facilities for supportive housing and that the Measure B Citizen's Oversight Committee ("the Committee") has recommended approval. I am equally concerned that the Plan apparently has under review the concept of using \$1.6 to \$2.2 million to remodel or build a board and care facility. These facilities are needed locally but I do not believe this is what the voters expected when they approved Measure B.

In addition to the regional training center, most voters believed they were voting for a Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF). The closure of a previous PHF was the centerpiece of the campaign in support of Measure B. Other facilities that have been widely discussed and generally supported by the Committee and the Board of Supervisors are a Crisis Residential Treatment ("CRT") facility and a Crisis Stabilization Unit ("CSU"). However, the Plan makes no mention of a CSU which raises the question if this was intentional or an oversight.

The Mental Health Treatment Act ("the Act") appeared on the ballot as Measure B and was approved by the voters three years ago this week. The Specific Purpose of the Act, as stated in Section 5.180.040 A, and B. was: *"Provide for assistance in the diagnosis, treatment and recovery from mental illness and addiction by developing 1) a psychiatric facility and other behavioral health facilities; and 2) a regional behavioral health training facility to be used by behavioral health professionals, public safety and other first responders" and "Provide for the necessary infrastructure to support and stabilize individuals with behavioral health conditions including addiction and neurological disorders."*

It may be argued that the phrase "provide for the necessary infrastructure" provides justification for supportive housing and board and care facilities. There are only two problems with this approach: 1) the voters were never told this was the purpose; 2) it is uncertain if there is sufficient funding to construct the facilities that the voters thought they were voting for. During the campaign for Measure B there was no discussion of using Measure B funds to buy, remodel or build supportive housing or a board and care facility.

The Board of Supervisors needs to decide if we will honor the intent of Measure B and the will of the voters or not. I believe the focus needs to shift to construction of a PHF. It is past time to decide if it is feasible to construct and operate a PHF or not. Many people, myself included, had hopes that a PHF would have been operational earlier this year at the latest. Now it is not projected to be operational for another three years. Capital funds must not be expended for other facilities until it has been determined if the County will move forward with construction of a PHF or not.