

## **Lopez, Maria [COB]**

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**From:** karenita hernandez <karenita33@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 9:10 AM  
**To:** Page, Leon; COB\_Response  
**Subject:** 1/26 BOS Meeting Comments

**Attention:** This email originated from outside the County of Orange. Use caution when opening attachments or links.

Because of my medical disability/condition and my COVID-19 vulnerability of being a high risk individual, I have been advised by my health care professionals to continue to shelter at home during the COVID pandemic. This renders me unable to attend the Board meeting in person. Therefore, I am submitting my comments here and I ask that you accommodate my needs by reading these remarks into the record at the appropriate time.

I also have watched prior meetings and am extremely concerned that no one is personally safe in attending the Board of Supervisors meeting since mask wearing is not being enforced inside, or out, during the meetings, and no precautionary measures are being taken to sterilize doors or objects between speakers. The pandemic keeps raging on worse than ever and this Board and Sheriff continue to do nothing to enforce safety.

### **AGENDA ITEM 24**

Yesterday the Voice of OC published an article about the county has spent more CARES Act funding on Sheriff Staff than Health Care Workers. In a year where crime was down, and 55% of the supplemental budget already went to Public Protection (Sheriff, DA & jails) AND knowing (thanks to their own press releases) OC Sheriffs have not been working to enforce state COVID-19 mandates, or provide the necessary PPE, soap and personal hygiene items to incarcerated individuals resulting in huge COVID-19 outbreaks in the jails, how can this Board of Supervisors justify spending less on healthcare workers during a pandemic? The same people who struggle to receive PPE and are overworked risking their lives to save others? Outrageous and shameful! And now in your Mid-Year Budget report you're showing increased spending of 5.4% (\$37.7 million) in Public Protection is primarily due to increases in salaries and benefits costs and...spending for the James A. Musick (JAMF) facility expansion? This is wrong and gives community groups the support to need when we say DEFUND THE POLICE. Work less and get paid more? This obviously shows that you are fine leaving the most vulnerable communities, and people in them in the cold. Taking free federal money while cutting programs! You obviously care about nothing but policing, jailing and criminalizing our communities instead of saving them.

### **AGENDA ITEM 29**

I continue to be disgusted and outraged by the highly irresponsible behavior exhibited by Sheriff Barnes in his appeal of Judge Peter Wilson's legitimate order for him to release half of the people currently held in the OC jails. The judge's order came because the Sheriff has allowed his jails to become a hotbed of coronavirus infection where one in three prisoners has been infected with COVID, a half dozen are in the hospital and now two have died. Instead of acknowledging his failure to keep those under his watch safe and immediately getting to work on a plan to depopulate, Sheriff Barnes instead began yet another targeted misinformation campaign directed towards city councils & the public blatantly suggesting that the judge's orders would result in the release of convicted murderers, rapists and child molesters into the community; this was an orchestrated lie in an effort to get them to support his appeal. Instead, the real truth about the people detained in OC jails is that many are there for simple parole violations or other minor infractions. In fact, over 66% of people in the OC jails are still awaiting trial and have not even been convicted of any crime; so what happened to innocent until proven guilty?! Even if they have been convicted of a crime, being sent to the Orange County Jail should never be a death sentence.

The unforgivable conditions in OC jails have been widely documented and the subject of lawsuits now & in the past; add to that the lack of PPE, sanitary conditions, even no soap provided to inmates. It is shameful that Sheriff Barnes chose to demonize a vulnerable population of our community rather than protect the humanity of these people and not put them in mortal danger. Recently, there was a news report of a mountain lion captured in a Santa Ana neighborhood that was treated with more care, consideration and dignity by OCSD than what has been shown to incarcerated people in Orange County. The order must be followed as it will save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19, both inside and outside the jail. It is clear that OCSD has not taken the necessary steps to protect incarcerated people from the spread of COVID-19, nor have they been honest about the circumstances and risk levels in their facilities. SHERIFF BARNES NEED TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE and truthfully should resign. Mask-wearing, social distancing and basic concern for our fellow human beings, whether incarcerated or not, should be the least we expect from our public officials. A humanitarian crisis continues to unfold in OC jails, and Sheriff Barnes and public officials have a moral and legal responsibility to respond to it.

K. Hernandez  
Anaheim resident