



**PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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LINDSEY P. HORVATH
JANICE HAHN
KATHRYN BARGER

Correspondence Received

Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments	
The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:					
10.		Favor	Byron Jose	As part of reducing pre-trial populations, and the minimum and one of the urgent steps towards actually closing Men's Central Jail, Trans, Gender Expansive, and Intersex communities would like to thank Supervisor Mitchell for her leadership on this motion to establish a Pre-Trial agency. Community members and system-impacted residents continue to call on the Board to fund and prioritize care first pre-trial services informed by folks with lived-experience. TGI community members in alignment towards a Care First, Jails Last vision call for an independent pre-trial agency outside of Sheriff/Probation/Carceral institutions. Additionally, as part of Measure J mandates and CFCI priorities, the Justice Care and Opportunities Department really needs to center care- it is what the community expects from this department. We know electronic monitoring is not care. Electronic monitoring is a system designed to fail and a path right back to incarceration.	
			George Wang		
			Janette Monfared	—	
			Joey Williams	I support: Reaffirming a non-carceral vision for JCOD pretrial services; A timeline to implement care first pretrial services within JCOD; Public data reporting as a first step to implement care first pretrial services; An advisory body that includes community experts to steward the process.	
			Maria Jose Vides		
			Megan Castillo		
			Melissa Camacho	Please see attached letter	
			Oppose	Jorge Lara	
		Other	Charles Vignola	I am reaching out on behalf of the LA Regional Reentry Partnership so speak on Motion 10. Creating opportunities for county activists, agencies, and organizations to speak to JCOD programs and see data is vital to the long term success and viability of JCOD, but we believe the best path forward is to have the existing JCOD infrastructure support these programs rather than create new work and a new steering committee for this department. We urge the Board to consider amending the motion to task the current JCOD team and steering committee with these responsibilities to streamline the process and allow JCOD to thrive. Thank you.	
		Item Total		9	

Grand Total			9	
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June 3, 2024

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

Supervisor Mitchell

Supervisor Solis

Supervisor Horvath

Supervisor Hahn

Supervisor Barger

Via email: executiveoffice@bos.lacounty.gov

Re: In Support of Board Agenda Item 10: Motion, Entitled, “Establishing a Care First Pretrial Agency: Maximizing the Impact of the Justice, Care and Opportunities Department”

Dear Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Michelle Parris. I am the director of Vera California, an initiative of the Vera Institute of Justice, a national organization working to end mass incarceration, protect immigrants’ rights, ensure dignity for people behind bars, and build safe, thriving communities. I am a resident of District 1 and a member of the Gender Responsive Advisory Council (GRAC). I am writing in support of the board motion to establish a robust and transparent Care First pretrial agency in Los Angeles County.

Vera California has participated in numerous county workgroups developing plans to decarcerate Los Angeles County’s jails and build care in the community, including the Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Workgroup, the Men’s Central Jail (MCJ) Closure Workgroup, and the Jail Population Review Council.

At the end of April, Vera California hosted 225 community members and county leaders, from 20 county agencies and 90 community organizations, to reconvene the ATI Workgroup. This event highlighted **three key ways** the county should build care in the community to help it accomplish its goal to close Men’s Central Jail without a replacement. **Each is embodied in this motion.**

First, the motion will lay the groundwork for the creation of a pretrial services agency in Los Angeles County to coordinate the delivery of “care first” supportive services for people navigating the pretrial process. It is important for Los Angeles County to remain committed to the “care first, jails last” vision as our north star, especially as our community members are dying [on the streets](#) and [inside county jails](#) without care and services. Most of Los Angeles’s jail population is being [held pretrial](#), which is meant to be a public safety safeguard, not a punishment. Yet, [research shows](#) that spending even 24 hours in jail while waiting for a court date can have catastrophic consequences like the loss of employment, child custody, and even housing. For too many Angelenos, a stay in county jail has meant a death sentence. Since January 2023, [nearly 60 people](#) have died while incarcerated in Los Angeles County Jails—many of them pretrial, many with unmet mental health needs, and many people of color. Supportive pretrial services [facilitate releases](#) into care, so that people can return to their community, family, healthcare, and jobs without having to languish in jail.

Second, the motion will ensure that information about pretrial services and programs is made publicly accessible. As we advance a vision [recommended by the county and community](#), it is important for Los Angeles County to follow [best practices for implementing supportive pretrial services](#)— including ongoing evaluation and public data and outcomes sharing. Doing so will help build credibility in pretrial services with the courts and the public by showing a “care first” program works to promote safety. While pretrial electronic monitoring (EM) is frequently ordered to facilitate releases, it is not an evidence-based practice and has instead been shown to lead to [adverse effects](#)— including reincarceration and increased barriers to employment for participants. The way to responsibly reduce the reliance on it while promoting decarceration is to show through data and success stories that pretrial EM is unnecessary for safe releases and, in fact, getting at root causes of contact with the system—as the independent pretrial agency should do—produces better outcomes. Public data sharing will show successes, help address gaps in service delivery, and improve “care first” program outcomes.

Third, the motion reinforces the importance of working in partnership with community—as modeled by the [ATI workgroup process](#)—to help Los Angeles County succeed in building much-needed care first pretrial services. This process must include stakeholders such as community members, service providers, and formerly incarcerated people as decision-makers, consultants, and implementation partners. For example, community members can help the county understand when programs such as housing models are not inclusive or fail to meet the needs of community members; service providers can work with county agencies to improve program access and delivery; and formerly incarcerated people and their families can provide important insights on whether screenings, service connections, and case management are working well and what kinds of improvements can support better outcomes. This feedback and partnership are crucial to building responsive and supportive systems of care—and as we learned during the recent [ATI reconvening](#), community stakeholder engagement remains largely under-solicited and neglected in program and solution design and implementation.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to vote “YES” to support this motion. We stand ready to help the county establish robust pretrial services, close MCJ, and help build thriving communities. Vera’s experts and researchers would be glad to provide more information on supportive pretrial services models. You can contact me at mparris@vera.org.

Sincerely,



Michelle Parris
Program Director
Vera California



June 3, 2024

Via e-mail

Members of the Board of Supervisors
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Establishing a Care First Pretrial Agency: Maximizing the Impact of Justice, Care and Opportunities Department

Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors:

We thank Supervisor Mitchell for her leadership in making JCOD an effective part of the Board's care first, jails last vision and commend her for authoring a motion that will move JCOD to establish an effective independent pretrial agency. Los Angeles County's continued overreliance on incarceration fails to reach "the root causes of crime and can often result in a cycle of trauma, poverty, and more incarceration." Motion at p. 1. JCOD cannot fulfill the County's care first, jails last vision without a concrete plan to build an independent pretrial agency. That plan, coupled with the Permanent Steering Committee and robust data collection and reporting proposed in the motion, will allow stakeholders and this Board to hold JCOD accountable to the care first, jails last commitment and evaluate its effectiveness in drastically reducing the number of people held in custody pretrial.

The care first, jails last vision must create a system in which people receive support and services as alternatives to incarceration. In Los Angeles County, alternatives to incarceration are necessary to reduce the pretrial population to a level where the Board can follow through on its promise to close Men's Central Jail. As the Motion notes, however, the percentage of the jail population being held pretrial has increased. Motion at 2-3. When the Close Men's Central Jail

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*deceased

report was released in March 2021, there were 5,713 people being held pretrial.¹ The Close MCJ workgroup set a target of 3,488 people held pretrial, but today, there are 6,486 people held pretrial. By voting in favor of this motion, the Board will demonstrate its commitment to drastically reduce the number of people held pretrial. The Board must stay engaged as the data is posted and hold JCOD's pretrial agency accountable to investing in programs that reduce the pretrial population.

While we acknowledge JCOD's early efforts in providing alternatives, we agree that JCOD must now present a comprehensive independent pretrial services plan, one that exists outside and apart from the Probation Department and eschews any Electronic Monitoring. As the motion notes, "Proven care first pretrial services departments have [] avoided the indiscriminate use of electronic monitoring and have been situated outside of law enforcement and probation." Motion at 2. Directive One asks JCOD for an independent pretrial services agency, which we understand is to be independent from all law enforcement agencies, including Probation. We are eager to see the plan and appreciate Supervisor Mitchell's emphasizing the importance of situating the agency away from Probation and rejecting EM as a valid alternative to incarceration.

The data collection directive will allow this Board to see how EM is being applied in the County and will likely reveal how ineffective it is as a way of keeping the pretrial population down. Recent studies have shown that EM only perpetuates the cycle of mass incarceration. The number of people in the Los Angeles County being placed on EM has increased by 5,250 percent over the past six years.² Conditions of EM are generally too extreme for people who are presumed innocent.³ Being terminated for non-compliance is the greatest reason why people are re-incarcerated in pre-trial EM, not because of a new arrest or absconding.⁴ There is no research to suggest that the program efficiently lowers recidivism and incarceration rates, yet data shows that courts are "erring on the side of the most restrictive condition- that of EM."⁵

¹ <https://www.vera.org/carefirstLA>.

² See, Alicia Virani, *Pre-Trial Electronic Monitoring in Los Angeles County 2015 through 2021*, at 8, https://law.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/PDFs/Criminal_Justice_Program/Electronic_Monitoring_in_Los_Angeles_Report-FINAL.pdf.

³ *Id.* at 3.

⁴ *Id.* at 2.

⁵ *Id.* at 15.

The public and this Board must have the data to track EM use and assess whether the pretrial program is working to shrink the jail population. We are also concerned that EM violates care first principles when courts impose EM when true alternatives to incarceration are available. The data will allow the public to see what alternatives people on EM were eligible for but did not receive, and whether EM is reducing or increasing pretrial incarceration rates in the County. The demographic breakdown will also allow us to see whether, and to what degree, EM disproportionately impacts Black women.⁶

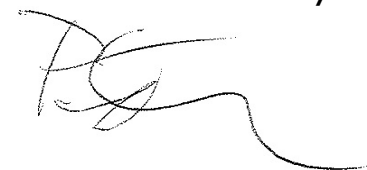
The data collection directive will also allow the Board and the public to see how effective JCOD's current programs have been. Knowing the number of calls the JCOD support center receives and how many people are connected to services will allow the Board to hold JCOD accountable to investing in programs that serve the care first, jails last vision.

The Board is relying on JCOD to champion its care first, jails last vision and bring the jail population down to a level where closing Men's Central Jail becomes a reality instead of a years-old promise. The only way forward is a comprehensive, independent pretrial services plan, full data transparency, and a steering committee that makes JCOD accountable to stakeholders who believe in closing Men's Central Jail.

Sincerely,



Melissa Camacho
Senior Staff Attorney



Peter Eliasberg
Chief Counsel

⁶ Virani, *supra*, Pre-Trial Electronic Monitoring in Los Angeles County 2015 through 2021, at 11.