

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

April 7, 2026

Strengthening Services and Aligning Resources for Probation and Foster Youth Impacted by Human Trafficking

On February 10, 2026, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the "[Supporting Probation and Foster Youth Impacted by Human Trafficking with Community-Based Supports](#)" motion, which directed the Departments of Probation (Probation), Children and Family Services (DCFS), and Youth Development (DYD) to report back on critical information, including staffing, funding, and service delivery plans, for children impacted by human trafficking, including those impacted by Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE). In addition to identifying funding sources for this work, the motion called for a discussion of "options to minimize dual-system involvement by consolidating care within the least restrictive, most supportive system, including options for DCFS to assume primary case management responsibility for appropriate dual-status youth, while Probation conducts a comprehensive review of all Commercial Sexual Exploitation-identified youth to determine eligibility for termination of probation jurisdiction for youth without new criminal

MOTION

MITCHELL _____

HORVATH _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

SOLIS _____

charges for at least one year, as a stabilizing intervention that supports developmental health, educational continuity, and long-term recovery.” It also directed Probation and DCFS to provide a plan for filling key vacancies and an exploration of “whether the Department of Youth Development can provide referrals for those Probation youth without a DCFS case.” The Board recognizes that departments must operate within the parameters of existing state funding streams, including SB 794, and that advancing a public health approach requires phased implementation, cross-system coordination, and careful alignment of statutory requirements with emerging best practices. County departments must come together in support of this transition by identifying opportunities to better align existing resources, improve coordination, and strengthen service delivery over time.

The report back, received in March 2026, was deeply concerning, highlighting several areas of misalignment between available resources and current services delivery, particularly related to staffing capacity, referral pathways, and utilization of time-limited state funding. The report back also provided conflicting information on the amount of funding actually available. These findings present a critical opportunity for the County to strengthen the implementation of its public health approach by ensuring that existing resources are effectively deployed to reach youth in need. Probation currently has 5 vacancies in their Child Trafficking Unit (CTU). They received \$423,227 in State SB 794 funds for this year that must be fully spent by June 20, 2026. After sending \$250,000 to DYD to contract with five community-based providers at \$50,000 each, Probation has \$166,413 that must be spent by June 30, 2026 (and possibly more should the purchase orders not be fully spent). The report back included the incorrect dollar amount of spent

SB 794 funds and did not include any plans for Probation to fully spend down these dollars. As an illustration of the disconnected nature of the current relationship, Probation has partnered with DYD to temporarily transfer five purchase orders totaling \$250,000 with community-based organizations supporting trafficked youth, but these community-based organizations rely on Probation referrals to find the youth they are funded to serve. Due to staffing challenges at Probation, these referrals are often not made, and it is unclear how much of the \$250,000 has even been spent this year.

For its part, DCFS has contracts with two service providers to provide services to young people, but because they are reliant on referrals from law enforcement, they have over \$1.9 million in unspent funding for this year, which must be spent by September 30, 2026. For the past three years, DCFS has left over \$1 million unspent annually, returning these funds back to the state instead of finding innovative ways to receive referrals to serve youth in need. DCFS has separate Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with both Los Angeles County Sheriff Department (LASD) and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to recover missing youth, funding these services annually with \$100,000 each of SB 794 funds. Since 2024, only 73 referrals were made under the LASD MOU and only 43 referrals under the LAPD MOU. The contract amount and outreach strategy have not changed despite the low referrals, limited law enforcement capacity, and the County's shift to a public health approach.

Neither department shared information on how they plan to spend these dollars to better serve young people by the state's deadline, or how they are thinking through their approach and strategy for the next fiscal year despite this continued pattern. While these systemic gaps remain, the County has struggled to decarcerate women, girls, and gender

expansive youth from Probation's struggling facilities.

Taken together, these findings suggest that current challenges are not primarily resource constraints, but rather relate to shortcomings in system coordination, referral pathways, and implementation infrastructure—key areas that a public health approach is designed to strengthen over time through continuous assessment, iteration, and alignment of resources with demonstrated need and impact.

The report notes that Probation, DCFS, and DYD are working together on various plans to better coordinate, particularly with dual jurisdiction youth, but gives no details on this plan or a sense of timeline. This is also true of plans Probation references throughout the report back—no details, no timeline, no clear strategy discussed.

This County has time and again lifted up the need to better support our young people, especially those in our custody impacted by human trafficking. We have also recognized that a punitive, law enforcement-based approach to this work is not aligned with our Care First values. This Board has committed to shifting to a public health approach to human trafficking, a response grounded in prevention, harm reduction, and the recognition that system involvement itself can compound trauma, disrupt development, and undermine long-term stability for trafficked youth and requiring ongoing evaluation of which interventions improve safety, stability, and long-term outcomes. This is what the community, including young people, their families, and the community-based organizations that serve them, have told us they want and need.

A public health approach does not mean doing less—it means doing what works: preventing exploitation before it occurs, intervening early when risks emerge, and investing in strategies that support safety, stability, and long-term healing, while

continuously evaluating outcomes and adjusting approaches to ensure effectiveness and responsible use of public funds.

Young people in our custody, through DCFS and Probation, must be quickly connected to the services they need to heal. This is not a funding problem—the report back indicated that we have hundreds of thousands of dollars in unspent State funding that the County will lose by June 30, 2026. We have providers that are standing by and ready to do the work. The gap is in how systems are currently structured to deploy those resources efficiently and equitably. This is a problem of referrals, contracts, staffing, and interdepartmental barriers, resulting in both punitive responses and prolonged custody for youth whose primary needs are safety, stability, and care. Our systems are not giving our young people the services and support they need to recover and heal. The County can and must do better.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE, that the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Direct the Chief Probation Officer, in coordination with the Chief Executive Officer, to immediately transfer, or otherwise make immediately available, the remaining unspent SB 794 funds, totaling \$166,413, to the Department of Youth Development (DYD) to contract with service providers to engage in street outreach and services for young people. This transfer is intended to ensure the deployment of existing resources toward community-based prevention and early intervention strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness in engaging youth outside of custodial settings within the current fiscal year.

- 2) Authorize DYD to use the Probation-related emergency declaration to accelerate contracting to serve as many trafficked youth as possible and make all reasonable efforts to ensure these funds are spent by the end of this fiscal year.
- 3) Direct the Chief Probation Officer to submit a written report back to the Board within 90 days, followed by a verbal presentation to the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting on the “Status of the Probation Department”, addressing whether they will be able to fill the Child Trafficking Unit’s (CTU) 5 vacant positions with knowledgeable staff by the end of this fiscal year and in FY 26-27. The report back should identify the bureau from which the assigned staff filling vacancies will be sourced, their current assignments, and their level of knowledge and experience related to child trafficking and trauma-informed approaches, and a proposed timeline for having the unit fully staffed. The report back should also indicate that staff serving in the CTU should not be deployed to the camps and halls unless Probation is simultaneously entering into Memoranda of Understanding with other departments or contracts with community-based services to provide services in the alternative.
 - a. This report back should also include a discussion of how the specific functions of the CTU can be better supported while Probation works to fill vacant positions. This plan should clearly address filling positions; supervision; Succeeding Through Achievement and Resilience Court (STAR Court) liaison duties; First Responder Protocol (FRP) responsibilities as outlined in the County Memoranda of Agreement (MOA); Victim/Witness testimony support as outlined in the County MOA; efforts to locate missing

youth who are at risk of or identified as trafficking victims as outlined in the Location MOUs with LASD, LAPD, and DCFS; assessments; MDT roles and responsibilities; participation in the weekly DCFS MDT; and referrals to advocacy agencies.

4) Direct Probation, DCFS, and DYD to submit a written report back to the Board within the next 60 days with the following information:

- a. A proposed coordinated strategy to ensure that youth identified as experiencing exploitation and trafficking are connected to advocacy services as early as possible. This strategy should include discussion of Probation youth, DCFS youth, dual system youth, and non-systems impacted youth.
- b. An explanation of why there have been very few referrals to DYD advocacy agencies with purchase orders over the past several months, along with Probations' plans moving forward to ensure that all SB 794 funding is fully utilized using the Probation emergency declaration to support services and assistance for youth impacted by CSE and youth who go missing. This explanation should include identification of structural or operational barriers and proposed solutions to improve referral flow and service uptake.
- c. Clarity on the role DYD can play in expanding prevention and stabilization services for youth impacted by trafficking, and what resources, including Healthier Communities, Stronger Families, Thriving Children (HST) funds, SB 794 and SB 855, could be shifted to fund this expansion and scale these programs. This should include an analysis of existing funding sources,

including SB 855 and SB 794 unspent dollars and existing balances, that could be used to support DYD's capacity to support youth impacted by trafficking. The analysis should examine how to leverage existing contracts for trainings and consultation, and what programs can be rightsized to ensure funding amounts are matched with actual program capacity and demand.

- d. A discussion of opportunities to reduce dual-system involvement for youth impacted by trafficking by consolidating case management within the least restrictive, most supportive system. This should include a discussion of challenges and potential barriers to doing so.
- e. Data on the number of youth identified as being impacted by trafficking who were referred to advocacy services over the past two years. The data should be disaggregated by contracted advocacy providers and reported separately by agency (including DCFS advocacy contracts and agencies receiving services through DYD purchase orders) and should not be combined across agencies.
 - i. The report should also include available outcome measures by agency, including: youth engagement; the length of time advocacy services were provided by each agency; indicators of youth stability following closure of advocacy services; and the reason for case closure, with all data reported separately for each agency. Outcome measures should prioritize indicators of stability, connection to care, and reductions in system involvement.

- f. A discussion of the outcomes that are tracked following locate-and-recovery operations for missing young people, including service connection, placement stability, and repeat missing episodes. This should also include recommendations on how youth voices can be incorporated into assessing the effectiveness of recovery interventions.
- g. A review of the Local MOUs with LASD and LAPD to determine whether these services continue to be necessary, particularly given the County's adoption of a public health model and the low percentage of youth recovered by law enforcement. This review should include options for shifting this initiative and funding to an alternative model. Any recommended changes should consider how to maintain safety while expanding community-based, relationship-centered approaches to engagement and recovery.
- h. A plan detailing how the Probation and DCFS 241.1 units will communicate all suspected or identified youth at risk of, or experiencing, Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) to the dedicated units in a timely manner for assessment, and referral to advocacy services. The plan should include participation and coordination across multidisciplinary teams and departments, including DYD, the Probation 241.1 unit participating in the CTU weekly MDTs when dual-jurisdiction youth are being discussed, and a CTU Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) participating in the weekly MDT when dual-jurisdiction youth are discussed, in order to collaborate on case planning, jurisdictional considerations, and service coordination.

- i. A plan that identifies alternatives to detention for youth identified as victims of CSE who have misdemeanor charges or who are currently detained on warrants or probation violations.
 - i. This should include referrals for all identified youth to appropriate community advocacy agencies for services and support.
 - ii. It should also outline a process for reviewing currently detained cases to determine whether release and, where appropriate, termination of probation jurisdiction is warranted.
 - iii. It should address both new or returning cases by establishing clear alternatives-to-detention options, as well as the review of existing detained cases for potential release and termination of probation supervision.
 - j. A discussion of ways to publicize and improve the referral process across County departments and stakeholders to ensure that all who are lawfully allowed to refer relevant youth to these services understand that they can make those referrals and understand how to make those referrals.
- 5) Direct DCFS to submit a written report back to the Board within 15 days with the following information:
- a. A summary of the yearly unspent funds, Healthier Communities, Stronger Families, Thriving Children (HST) funds and State Realignment dollars, allocated for human trafficking training for the past four fiscal years, including whether the funds were rolled over to the following fiscal year, reallocated to other funding items, or returned to the State. The summary

should also include an explanation of why additional funding is being requested given the level of unspent funds during this period.

- b. A summary of the yearly unspent funds allocated for Advocacy Services for Youth Impacted by Commercial Sex Exploitation (SB 855 and HST funds) for the past four fiscal years, including whether the funds were rolled over to the following fiscal year, reallocated to other funding items, or returned to the State.
 - i. This should include an evaluation of the level of funding needed for DCFS advocacy contracts in light of the recurring unspent funds across multiple fiscal years.
 - ii. It should also include a discussion of potential opportunities to work with DYD to identify opportunities to utilize these funds to support additional advocacy services beyond the current DCFS-contracted providers and contracts.
 - iii. It should include a detailed plan of how DCFS plans to spend this year's unspent funds by June 30, 2026, either by increasing outreach services or moving the funds to DYD to send additional funds to the organizations with which they have existing purchase order contracts.
- 6) Direct DCFS to submit a written report back to the Board within 60 days discussing the various strategies they are implementing to reduce placement instability among youth with trafficking-related concerns, and how housing stability interventions are being evaluated.

- 7) Direct DYD to submit a written report back to the Board within 90 days detailing plans to work with DCFS to ensure that CSEC training is incorporated for DYD staff and contracted agencies as a required component of the existing training contract.
 - a. Given that multiple trainings are already being conducted each month, DCFS should provide DYD with a consolidated list and schedule of these existing trainings so the information can be regularly distributed to DYD-funded providers. This process should ensure that providers are informed of and able to participate in trainings that are already funded and in place, maximizing the use of existing resources and expanding access to education and capacity building related to child trafficking services.
- 8) Direct the Chief Probation Officer, in collaboration and consultation with the directors of DYD, DCFS, and the County Counsel, as appropriate, to submit a written report back to the Board within 30 days with the following information:
 - a. A detailed plan for the assessment of all 38 youth who have not had an arrest in over one year, including deidentified information detailing: the youth's most recent felony arrest; the community advocacy services each youth is currently receiving; and any efforts made by the Deputy Probation Officer (DPO), the youth's attorney, and the District Attorney to recommend termination of the youth's probation case to the court. If the recommendation is for the youth to remain on probation, Probation should outline the specific barriers or considerations preventing termination.

- i. For youth who are currently detained, Probation should provide information on Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) efforts being made to support the youth's release, including anticipated timeframes. Probation should also identify the number of detained youth currently receiving services from a community advocacy agency, including which agency is engaged with the youth and family to prepare for the youth's return home. Emphasis should be placed on identifying safe, least restrictive alternatives to detention and ensuring service engagement begins prior to release.
 - ii. For youth who cannot return home due to safety concerns, Probation should provide information on efforts being made in collaboration with DCFS to transfer jurisdiction upon the youth's release from detention or custody programs, with the goal of consolidating care within the least restrictive, most supportive system.
- b. Information on the current process for referring justice-involved youth from Probation to service providers, including community advocacy agencies, and a plan to expedite and improve access for future referrals to services that incorporate Probation's staffing challenges and the capacities of other stakeholders. This should include coordinated plan for engagement with parents and caregivers by Probation, DCFS, DYD, and advocacy agencies to help prepare families for the youth's return home and connection to services after release, as well as for youth who are already

identified and living in the community. Additionally, the report should detail the scope of parent and caregiver advocacy services.

- 9) All data collection and reporting pursuant to this motion should be limited to what is necessary to assess service access and outcomes and conducted in a manner that protects youth privacy and avoids unintended system or surveillance impacts.

#

LH:es