

JJRBG Meeting March 30, 2022
Written Public Comments Submitted via E-mail
Agenda Item III a.

1. Clara Keane

The Anti-Recidivism Coalition thanks the JJRBG committee for its work however we, as an organization, have concerns since it nearly 8 months have passed and you have still not selected a site despite the BOS already voting on it last week. At this point, all the kids who are currently confined and housed in Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH) should have been moved to a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) 8 months ago. The longer the county waits, the longer youth will continue to be kept away from rehabilitative programming and not receiving the support that is crucially important in their development and reentry journey. The County cannot continue to delay young people's hope and a chance at redemption. It's time we stop demonizing and playing hot potato with the lives of young people, and finally provide them with the opportunity to become the best versions of themselves and for their communities. Everyone has rejected or has agreed the BJNJH is not an option whatsoever: The county MUST REJECT Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH) being the permanent SYTF site for youth in LA County.

2. Yesica Cambero

I am a hope and redemption team life coach at ARC. I am representing the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. As a formerly incarcerated youth offender I am here to share my story about what could've helped me when I was 17 and detained at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall. Barry J. was unable to provide the proper safety and security therefore would leave us locked in a cell for 23 hours a day. I was not provided proper guidance as to what to do after I was released, there wasn't any efforts of rehabilitation nor a safe place to provide those measures. Placing Children in a facility like youth authority and Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall hinders them from self-healing, growth and maturity. If placed in a camp based placement will allow these children to have weekly visits to help with family reconciliation, they will have access to outside volunteers that will provide classes for life skills, job readiness and self help. As a former Lifer I know the difference these resources made in my life, I was able to grow and learn from my past as opposed to letting my past define me. Thank you for your time in this matter, God bless you and have a great afternoon.

3. Alexia Cina

The county has already voted that Barry J will not be a permanent housing facility for youth and there is still not a selected site. At this point the youth who are currently confined in Barry j should have been moved to a secure youth track facility 8 months ago. These are youths lives we are talking about and they are being put on the back burner. To add, ARC continuously hears from youth that we are mentoring in BJNJH and DJJ that they want more programming. These youth need more then one hour a week of organizations going in to mentor them and provide the programming they deserve. The JJRBG should continue to be guided by youth Justice reimaged and support the reentry and services components of it. YJR needs investments and we need to continue to build from the youth Justice reimaged model.

4. Sophia Cristo

As a formerly incarcerated youth and adult, I want to express why BJNJH could never be a permanent facility for our youth. Aside from the county already voting that BJNJH wont be the

permanent facility for our youth, all that BJNJH is doesn't benefit our youth in any way, shape or form. It has been eight months and you have yet to pick a site. Why are these youth still stuck in BJNJH not receiving the proper care, services and programs they need? It is long overdue that these youth should have been moved to a Secure Youth Treatment facility. The county has to reject BJNJH as the permanent Secure Youth Track Facility. No matter what the county thinks they can do with some paint and different furniture, BJNJH will always be a traumatic prison like facility and these youth shouldn't have to spend another second.

5. Chloe Thomas

I'm a staff member at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC). As someone that works closely with previously incarcerated youth and young adults, I'm writing on item 3A, 3C and 3D. At this point, LA County has already agreed that Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall is not an option nor ideal for any type of youth rehabilitative setting or location. Youth need to start receiving the correct treatment, mentorship, support, and education that will ultimately address their traumas and behaviors. You don't accomplish this with more punitive practices. That's why at ARC we believe that those closest to the problem are the closest to the solution. We need to implement credible messengers, allow CBOs to start working with youth more holistically, and invest in more diversion and services provided by community. Right now, young people need guidance and support from people that they can relate to while at the same time, be provided with services that can support their transformation. I urge this committee to stop playing with the lives of young people and actually get the ball rolling in helping this population. They are suffering as we speak.

6. Melissa Mercado

I work for the Anti-Recidivism Coalition as an office assistant. I am also representing the Anti-Recidivism Coalition in this hearing today. As a formerly incarcerated person I know how a prison environment can be traumatic. The housing environment can be depressing when your in a closed confined cell. It makes a person feel dehumanized, like an animal. Although these adolescents are convicted of serious crimes the were children when they enter these facilities and can redirect their lives in a more humanized environment. I know this because I was also in a jail-like environment for a few years and it was so much harder to positively program. It wasn't until I went to a college-like environment that I could focus more on my rehabilitation. Please do not make Barry J Nidorf Juvenile hall the permanent facility for youth. It is not the right place for the youth that need help. We need this body to support Youth Justice Reimagined and implement its components of reentry and programming. Young people who have been committed to serious offenses also deserve love, compassion, safety, and the opportunity to change for the better. Let's move away from this facility conversation and start talking about what services we can actually provide them with right Now!!!!

7. David Negrete

The County has already voted that we do not make Barry J Nidorf Juvenile hall the permanent facility for youth. We need to start thinking and shifting our focus to ensuring young people who are still placed at BJNJH are receiving the correct treatment, mentorship, support, and education. This will begin to address their needs and prepare them for life post incarceration. When I was in Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall and in the Division of Juvenile Justice, there were many things I wish that could have been different and better. Throughout my incarceration, ARC followed me and supported me, however, they were limited to how much access they had or how much mentorship they could offer me because they were only allowed to visit and mentor me for a few hours in

BJNJH and DJJ. If we want to truly help these young people who have gone through some of the most traumatic experiences in their life, we need to have real programming and service providers like Credible Messengers available for young people and that are more embedded in their reentry plan. Right now, young people need guidance and support from people that they can relate to while at the same time, be provided with services that can support their transformation. Being in a jail-like environment like BJNIH, it is almost nearly impossible to motivate and inspire youth to not only hold themselves accountable, but also create a positive environment where staff are simply training to secure and house youth in cells. Programming is needed. I strongly believe that with more time allowed with credible messengers, it will make all the difference in keeping the peace, safety, and security of the facility, however I don't believe that B.J Nidorf J.H is the place for this.

8. Anthony Romero

I am a HART Life Coach for the Anti-Recidivism Coalition.

Though I have never spent time in a juvenile facility, I am someone who was formal incarcerated. I am reaching out in concern to agenda items 3A, 3B, & 3D.

As someone who provides a service to incarcerated adult individuals, I believe that there is a serious need for support to our youth offenders no matter the crime they committed. Youth offenders deserve the right to be in an institution that will allow for them to be provided the necessary tools of true rehabilitation. By simply housing youth with no form of assistance, for example Life Skills, 12 Step Programs, Domestic Violence, and Therapy, a future of rehabilitation and transformation is being excluded. These youth deserve a chance to find positive outlets. If youth institutions implemented positive programs with staff that were relatable this could change the environment and the individuals for a hope of a positive future.

9. Kevin Roberts

The Anti Recidivism Coalition thanks the JJRBG committee for your work. However, 8 months have passed and a site has not been selected. The Board of Supervisors voted on it last week. The County MUST reject the Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall SYTF site for L.A. County from being the permanent. It's a jail facility, not a place to redeem our most vulnerable.

10. Miguel Garcia

I'm the State Youth Justice Specialist at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. As a young person previously incarcerated in California, I'm here to speak on items 3A and 3D. The County Board of Supervisors has already voted not to make Barry J Nidorf Juvenile hall the permanent Secure Youth Treatment facility for youth. It is critical to consider and shift the county's direction to ensure that young people incarcerated in Los Angeles County receive suitable treatment, mentorship, support, and education. With proper treatment, youth should begin to address their needs and prepare them for life post-incarceration. A jail-like environment like BJNIH creates a limited atmosphere that causes it challenging to motivate and inspire youth. Programming is needed. Community-based organizations must have access to work with these youth. The county should consider staying committed to Youth Justice Reimagined and start implementing services and programming in Kilpatrick.