

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

1. Livia Rivero

I write to you today as a concerned mother of a young growing family, in strong opposition to the reopening of Camp Scott in Santa Clarita as a permanent Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) for the Department of Juvenile Justice male youth population.

In August 2021, my family and I purchased a home in the beautiful city of Santa Clarita. We chose to relocate here because of the suburban environment we considered to be a safe place to raise a family and appreciating property value. Shockingly on March 15, 2022, your Board approved (4-1), designating Camp Scott to be one of the two sites to relocate and house up to the 150 or more male detainees. These said detainees are amongst the state level Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) population of not only young children who had committed juvenile offenses but considered to be 'young adults' 18-25 years old, who have committed serious offenses – sex offense, rape, murder, attempted murder, arson, and robbery. The most violent male youth offenders!

This is frighteningly concerning for the members of the surrounding community including myself and my family who live within walking distance from the facility. Camp Scott sits only 600 ft away from residential homes and neighbors a preschool right next door and an elementary school a short distance away. THIS IS A VIOLATION OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ON SO MANY LEVELS! It is unsafe for not just the nearby residents but for the inmates. Camp Scott is in an area that could not be evacuated quickly in the event of an emergency situation (i.e. fire/flood). This area frequents power outages due to the wind.

I, along with my neighbors who would agree, can say that this is outrageous and shame on the BOS who approved to move forward with these extremely hazardous and careless plan. With over 70,000 surrounding residential homes and growing new developments, this poses a huge risk to our community and the sense of safety is now compromised. As a mother of a young child, I cannot help but think the extreme. What if an inmate is released/breaks out and walks over to the nearby schools where my children attend to commit a crime? Or go to a park where my children play? What if they are released/breaks out and break into our homes? Break into our cars? Or robbed while taking a stroll with your child? Is this what we have come to? The rehabilitation process is not proven to be 100% successful and many have been released into society only to commit another crime. Read the news! Our home property value will likely depreciate considerably and more families will be desperate to relocate and move out of the city.

I speak openly in this sense because we live in a scary world but if we can do anything to protect and prevent civilians to be victimized by possible repeat criminals nearby, we can. Innocent civilians who are not criminals should be protected. Not murderers or rapists who had premeditated thoughts to commit the heinous crimes that landed them in the system to begin with! These offenders need mental health and rehabilitative care in a remote area AWAY from the city, not live in the city tempting them to commit another crime. Camp Scott is unsuitable to house and serve juvenile serious offenders and is meant for a low-level population for petty crimes. Keep the inmates in Nidorf and Central Juvenile Hall and spend our tax paying dollars to renovate there, not here.

Let my voice be heard loud and clear – WE OPPOSE REOPENING CAMP SCOTT AS A PERMANENT SYTF!!

2. Lisa Cajulis

I am a community member and resident of Santa Clarita, California and live not very far from this Camp Scott.

There are many residential housing which means families, young children, teenagers etc all live close to this facility.

How can we be assure of safety for our community and families with this camp located so close?

While the plan that is laid out maybe a good one to help rehabilitate those incarcerated it is not remote enough from residential areas and schools.

As a resident, I am opposing that Camp Scott facility be used for this purpose at this time.

3. Marsha McLean

Hello, I am requesting to make live public comment during JJCC-JJRBG Subcommittee Meeting, March 30, 2022 – 2:30pm – 4:00pm. New Business Item III. and Public Comment Item V. as listed on the published Agenda.

4. Sue Fischer

I find myself here again sending yet another email to your sub-committee as I have done prior to every meeting. I will attempt to speak again, that is, if you don't outweigh the Santa Clarita Residents with the members of the ARC and their affiliates. I will tell you in both instances what I see in front of my eyes (600 ft from our first home) and what I know; in one whole minute. Because you actually don't care. Watching this for 11 months has been eye opening and sickening. I always tried to believe there is honesty in some politics and political arenas. Boy was I wrong! How very disappointing. The County Supervisors Meeting was a true circus. I was on the phone prior to the meeting and waited 90 minutes while a few important people in Santa Clarita spoke; our Mayor, the City Planner, the Mayor Protem and one of the council members. Then it was a string of people who have never seen Camp Scott and only know what they have been told; ex-convicts who have an axe to grind, and a non-profit that knows nothing about building a center to house juveniles to fit your model or even how to make the model work. One of your criteria and reason to have your inmates in Santa Clarita is for them to be released into a 'nice' area. That is ludicrous. Their family and friends don't live up here (for the most part). The way house pricing has gone since I moved up here our children cannot afford to live here. You are not thinking in reality.

Here are my objections and they come from someone who has major life experience with planning major projects:

According to accounts of what has gone on with Barry J. Nidorf, \$53 million dollars was spent on the facility, which reopened in July 2017. The prisoners were mistreated, living situations were untenable and programming was little to none. What you have done is take a facility that was built by our dollars and egregiously failed to do your jobs! BUT, instead of admitting that or even not admitting that, but go back and fix what you have failed to do, you are using our small area of Saugus, within the Santa Clarita Valley, to be used as a testing ground again. You have unhappy and improperly trained staff, you have no real plan; one of the supervisors from another region stated so at one of the meetings. Your plan is to build the facility to look nice instead of protecting the public. All that I've heard is about people who are being punished for a crime committed and

how to make them comfortable. No frills on my statement. From what I've heard, as I said before, you've done a terrible job. I would have been fired.

We purchased our homes in the mid-1980's. These homes, at the time, were the second least expensive in this valley at the time. It was the least expensive because there were only farms on the road at the time. I've lived here for 35 years and my home has appreciated, as everyone's has, including yours. My husband and I worked very hard and were able to pay off our mortgage prior to retiring. Our home is our investment. Now you want to come in and make its value drop. The home we intend to use to support us. Not the economy, but YOU! As you can see from Supervisor Keuhl reaction from her Malibu constituents, she wasn't going to let it happen in her neighborhood! And the camp in Malibu is far far away from neighborhoods. Somehow Supervisor Solis received LaVern in a redistricting move. Now they are out of the mix too. Just amazing! So according to all the name calling bullies in your circle we are all NIMBY and Racist, even you where you live!

This is a sickening situation. My understanding is that inmates have been moved back to Nidorf as is. Shame on you! You should have figured out how to fix most of it before they arrived and fixed your staffing situation as well instead of spending almost a year with this BS - not to forget the millions of dollars you received from the State to actually do the job. Rename the facility and do whatever it takes to take away the stigma. Unfortunately, there will be new inmates coming in. They won't have to experience what others have if you do this. It is NOT an impossible project. You are listening to inexperienced and highly agendized people. As a project manager one has to multitask; not just hold meetings.

5. Tim and Joy Ory

In following the process and actions for Los Angeles County's determination of a permanent SYTF location it is obvious decisions were made based on emotion.

Many community residents agree previous incarceration approaches have not been successful. In moving forward with re-imagined juvenile justice and implementing the LA Model decisions should not be based on emotion.

The most practical, least disruptive, and fiscally sound solution is to make the required renovations at Barry J. Nidorf as recommended by the County's own Probation Department. The Probation Department are the experts for the care of this population.

I urge you to consider the greater good for Los Angeles County's population of approximately 9.9 million.

How does spending millions of dollars on multiple facilities serve the greater good of Los Angeles County residents?

Proceeding with an SYTF in Santa Clarita:

- increases the distance for families to visit, visitation has been cited continuously by this Subcommittee as an integral aspect of rehabilitation
- increases commutes for service providers and probation employees, and the future credible messengers who will be seeking these jobs
- is only suitable to house 40 based on your own findings and the need identified is much greater at over 160

I urge you to revisit the matter of a permanent SYTF with the Board of Supervisors.

It's NOT about what Barry J has been. It's time to set aside emotions from the past and focus on what Barry J can become.

6. Sean Gage

I began going to Juvenile facilities at 13 years old up until the age 18. At 18 years old I was in route to state prison where I served a total of 27 years. While incarcerated in the juvenile facilities I know that I could have benefited from programs that focused upon building up my self-esteem and self-confidence. Programs that helped me understand why I was doing the things I was doing, who was affected by my actions and taking accountability for my actions. If I had programs like CGA and Emotional Intelligence, I would have understood myself and my actions better, thereby changing my conditions and behavior. Instead I was locked in a cage, was allowed recreational time and church! I didn't believe in religion and recreation was geared towards building my bravado. Therefore I was NEVER prepared to reenter society as a productive citizen. I support rehabilitative programming for our youth and willing to be a part of this change.

7. John Jarvie

I work for the Anti-Recidivism Coalition as a Life Coach for the Hope And Redemption Team, and as someone who was incarcerated for almost 28 years, I would like to say that when it comes to offenders, especially youth offenders, rehabilitative programming is very important. If we're going to place young people into the system, there needs to be effective programming in place. Education, self-help programs, and mentorship has been shown to not only lower recidivism rates, but to help prepare the participants for successful reentry. Any meaningful self-help programming should include credible messengers such as those who work for the Hope And Redemption Team. It has been shown that credible messengers, i.e. those who have similar life experiences, have the greatest impact. I would hope that any plan moving forward would give serious consideration to the inclusion of, and funding for, proven rehabilitative programming.

8. David Morales

To whom this matter concerns, I am a Hope and Redemption life Coach with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC), and as a formerly incarcerated person who was incarcerated at the age of 17 years old, I strongly oppose the proposed plan by Kathryn Barger to use the Barry J. Nidorf facility for our LA County JJCC, which has a long history of abuse, neglect, and misuse. The only reason that Kathryn Barger is strongly advocating for the continued use of Barry J. Nidorf is because she is pandering to the financially well to do communities of Malibu, Santa Clarita, and La Verne where better suited JJCC locations are, which would best work to rehabilitate young offenders. Ms. Barger's concern is not for the rehabilitation and care for young offenders, her concern is for her financially well to do constituents. The decision to about where to house youthful offenders is a vital one and should be where offenders can best be served with rehabilitative services, and certainly not at Barry J. Nirdorf where its history is mired in all that is counterproductive to rehabilitation.

9. Silus Valson

I write against the move by the Probation Union to make the Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall a permanent facility for youth who committed serious offenses. As someone that was previously incarcerated I can tell you that the youth living in horrendous environments does not make them rehabilitate. Rehabilitation is about love, support, and a commitment to actually wanting to see someone get better. As a formerly incarcerated person, support from Proposition 57 had a lot to do with me wanting better myself in prison, earning 880 worth of milestone completion since its enactment until my release on February 18, 2022. Opening Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall sends the opposite message to the youth that they are expected out of empathy from the State, with the support of the public, to look forward to change for a brighter future. Opening the facility sends the message that being tough is what life is about, and not improving your possibilities. I believe because of this that opening Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall will have inter-generational effect on the incarcerated there, by it already being designated as horrendous.

10. Serafin Leon

I am a life coach with the Anti Recidivism Coalition's (ARC) Hope and Redemption Team (HART). This is to express support for proper and humane housing for our juvenile offenders. As a former juvenile offender from Los Angeles County, I am all too familiar with the lack of meaningful rehabilitative programs within the county's juvenile hall facilities, including and particularly Barry J. Nirdoff Juvenile Hall (BJNJH). My experience at BJNJH was horrendous. Instead of serving as a rehabilitative facility, it functioned more as a violent gladiator school for already troubled and misguided youth. I strongly recommend housing our incarcerated youth in facilities equipped with meaningful academic and rehabilitative programs. And, as to the rehabilitative programs, these should be facilitated by credible messengers such as the life coaches of ARC and other reputable and effective organizations. Only with such programs and credible messengers was I able to turn that corner in my life for the better.

11. Wajuba McDuffy

I'm a life coach for the ARC(anti recidivism coalition) (heart & redemption team). As a former juvenile lifer I was incarcerated in all 3 juvenile facilities, as well as camp holton and camp miller. I can personally attest to the lack of care and guidance in these juvenile facilities. We were treated like dogs in a kennel. Looking back what was needed was some consistent counseling in helping me trying to understand my feelings and giving me a safe place to express myself. Had I been exposed to rehabilitative classes , I would have been able to explore different options. We need rehabilitative classes and life coaches with lived experiences.

12. Tommy Lewis

I am a Life Coach for the Anti Recidivism Coalition (ARC) HOPE AND REDEMPTION TEAM. As a young boy who began getting arrested at the age of 13 I give you my lived experience. At the age of 18 years old I was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to 41 years and 2 Life sentence. I understand how I failed, but as an adult man who understands rehabilitation and redemption, Sylmar Juvenile Hall where I was housed did not meet my needs and as a result the Juvenile Justice System failed me. Instead of working on healing the troubled young boy I was the remedy was to lock me away with another kid for endless hours. Counselors or Therapist did not show up to my door, or if they finally did there was no genuine care or concern nor could they relate to me

and my story. I felt isolated and alone and unsafe and needed direction, but usually found none when it came to the facility. I ended up serving 25 years in California Department of Corrections, I understand who I am today because of extensive self help programming, being mentored by the men who had walked my same path and understood my story, education, therapy, and consistently being involved in therapeutic environments that fostered my growth and development. These are the things that helped me. When I was locked away for hours upon hours (it didn't develop treat or heal me) but became the tool that brewed my childish machinations. Please understand that our kids need better from us and it begins on how we handle each individual circumstance. Treating them as kids who need our help versus monsters who we need to cage indefinitely as irredeemable.

13. Candice Lewis

I am a life coach for the Hope and Redemption team for ARC (Anti- Recidivism Coalition.) I am a formerly incarcerated woman that spent 2 1/2 years in the Juvenile Detention Center before being transferred to prison. As a juvenile I needed guidance and healing, locking me down like a animal did not open my mind and heart to rehabilitation all it did was make me more angry and contributed to my criminal addictive behavior. A open setting filled with therapy, staff with relatability, and positive surroundings would have been more conclusive to my rehabilitation.

It's time we stop demonizing and playing with the lives of young people and provide them with the opportunity to become the best versions of themselves and the community.

I know first hand that the county portrays these facilities to look like camp snoopy, nice with chairs and desks, colored walls with positive statements and attributions which is filled with lots of love and support. At the end of the day that is a false reality and no way is it factual. To be 100% frank it's a lie, It is still a "JAIL FACILITY."

We should not break our commitment to young people by building and investing in new jails. Adapting and rendering to BJNJH is completely opposite to the boards commitment of " Care first, Jails last." So, with all of this being said, the county should not invest in "NEW JAILS."

14. Clinton Drummer

i am a life coach and i am submitting my public comment on behalf of the the anti recidivism coalition, hope and redemption team

i wish to express concern for the future of our youth. As a formally incarcerated person, i have witnessed firsthand how dangerous it can be to be incarcerated in a environment where there are no self-help programs to help with personal growth. I believe our youth should have access to programs that helps them to learn and grow properly.

Please consider alternative ways to help these youth while incarcerated. I believe by doing that we can help our youth to grow into more responsible men and women instead of going to prison as an adult and getting the help there that they could've got as a juvenile...

15. Jeremy Bocel

I'm a Youth advocate at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. As someone that was previously incarcerated as a young person and as an adult, I'm here to speak on items 3A and 3D. The County has already voted that we do not make Barry J Nidorf Juvenile hall the permanent facility for youth. I'm in favor of CAMP SCOTT being the next secured facility for the youth. When I was in Barry J

Nirdorf Juvenile Hall and in the Division of Juvenile Justice, there were many things I wished could have been different and better. 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.

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 is more embedded in their reentry plan.

After all, these are our Youth and we should ensure that they are getting the proper treatment and rehabilitation so when these youth come back to our society they have the right support system and skills to better cope with everyday real-life situations.

Let this new facility be a place of healing and growth.

16. Serafin Leon

I am a life coach with the Anti Recidivism Coalition's (ARC) Hope and Redemption Team (HART). This is to express support for proper and humane housing for our juvenile offenders. As a former juvenile offender from Los Angeles County, I am all too familiar with the lack of meaningful rehabilitative programs within the county's juvenile hall facilities, including and particularly Barry J. Nirdorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH). My experience at BJNJH was horrendous. Instead of serving as a rehabilitative facility, it functioned more as a violent gladiator school for already troubled and misguided youth. I strongly recommend housing our incarcerated youth in facilities equipped with meaningful academic and rehabilitative programs. And, as to the rehabilitative programs, these should be facilitated by credible messengers such as the life coaches of ARC and other reputable and effective organizations. Only with such programs and credible messengers was I able to turn that corner in my life for the better.

17. Joseph Osorio

I am a Life Coach with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition and currently provide rehabilitation services to Pelican Bay State Prison.

I am submitting public comment to express my concern with the way these young youth are being housed. I am aware of the current situation with regards to finding them permanent placement. I am also aware that funding will be allocated to the county in hopes of providing adequate housing and programs for these young kids.

As a person who spent many years inside of Barry J. Nirdorf Juvenile Hall, I can tell you that it is not a place I believe that can effectively help our youth. I believe that kids who go to juvenile hall are not being provided the rehabilitative therapy that they need. Sylmar Juvenile Hall prepared me for prison not rehabilitation or freedom.

I am aware that many of the young kids have committed horrible crimes and need to be held accountable. I believe the best way to effectively handle these children is to place them in an environment that promotes healing, compassion, love and understanding. Punishment and isolation only fuel the inner resentment and anger that many of these kids are dealing with.

Many of our youth have also been victims at one point in their life and the traumatic events that they experienced are many of the reasons why they made the choices they did. The crimes they

committed are a reflection of the pain, neglect, abuse, embarrassment, low self-esteem, and abandonment issues that they have experienced.

Many of us channeled those emotions in a very destructive way not fully understanding what we were feeling or how to manage these emotions. These kids have been put into Juvenile facility's that I believe have good intentions however are just not working and outdated. These kids need consistent professional guidance as many of our children would need. Therapy services, education, vocational, financial, self-help and mentoring by individuals who have lived experience.

The staff who work in these facilities are hired to watch them and correct any misbehaviors. They are taught not to personally interact with them or share any personal information because of regulations. They keep them at a distance and don't bother to get to know the person. These kids need an environment where they can be social, active and heard on a daily basis.

My hope is that we can move away from punishment first and give these kids the guidance and tools needed to heal, rehabilitate and aspire to earn their freedom not a prison cell. Juvenile Hall prepared me for prison not college, not life, not therapy and certainly not freedom. Lets make a difference in our youth and show them that they can turn it around and be successful.

I wish I had a safe place to talk and share what I was going through with someone who I knew walked in my shoes. The folks closes to the solution are those who were once part of the problem. Invest in them and invest in the wealth of knowledge they have. Please consider my thoughts and know that I to was once young and reckless. My concern as a father now is public safety and being a positive roll model to our youth / peers.

18. Robert Decamp

I am a life coach with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition hope and redemption team as a formally incarcerated youth offender i can personally say that juvenile halls and camps were essentially training grounds for prison from my experience I truly believe that these juvenile halls and camps only made me have resentments towards the system as a whole and the opportunity to be rehabilitated was null and void. In my sincere opinion these places and places like these exemplify what is wrong with the justice system as a whole and especially when it comes to the youth. As opposed to locking up our youth and being as tough as possible i believe more programs are needed in the areas of self-help and life skills our youth need and deserve a second chance to become better citizens rather than adopting resentments towards the system and society. I am also requesting to make a live comment thank you for your time.

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19. Steven Castillo

I am a Life Coach on the Hope and Redemption Team with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition.

As someone that was previously incarcerated, I applaud any decision to cease the use of the Barry J. Nidorf facility to house current or future youth offenders. As science and our Supreme court has made clear, the human continues to develop and mature up to the age of 25. Factors that can interfere with a healthy development are factors like genetics and trauma.

For example, I was born to alcoholic and addicted parents which resulting in my siblings, and I being placed in separate foster homes, some of which were emotionally and physically abusive.

My mother remarried and regained custody of my siblings and I. However, she married another alcoholic and in our new home we witnessed domestic violence on a daily basis. Thus, the streets would eventually become my sanctuary from all the pain, stress, fear, and chaos in my life.

For these reasons I can attest that we need facilities that will address trauma and healing of our youth, not prisons that further trauma, and deplete our youth of any hope for healing and change.

20. Kevin Batres

I am part of the Hope and Redemption team here at Anti-Recidivism Coalition. Please consider bringing change for those young lost souls that are incarcerated. Implementing programs that cater to their needs will help guide them. Placing these young incarcerated individuals in a positive environment will place them on track to succeed. I was once one of those lost souls incarcerated in Sylmar Juvenile Hall. I believe if you implement credible programs into your facilities you will gradually see a positive change. Thank you for your time.

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21. Gary Burt

I am a life coach with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition's Hope & Redemption Team. As someone who was previously incarcerated in both youth and adult facilities, I know the importance of rehabilitative services. I can personally attest to the lack of guidance and case management within these facilities. What I can say I have learned from my experience is that when provided with these services it can promote and healthy learned behavior. Individuals with empathy and lived experience could best serve these young individuals, that is why I promote such services as life coaches and providers with evidence-based curriculum to provide a creditable message to the young people. I believe these services will play a catalyst in changing these young people's lives. Thank you for your time in this matter.

22. Olivia Shields

I want to remind the everyone that the Probation Department and Union has had 8 months to complete numerous site visits and determine how to best transition young people to Camp Kilpatrick, while in the meantime young people have been stuck in undoubtedly one of the most harmful youth prisons, Barry J. Nidorf. We need to move forward with a sense of urgency- begin moving youth immediately, and start necessary renovations! Furthermore, my colleagues and I are aware of how CEQA implications can be exploited to stall renovations in situations like these. All recommendations made by the DLR group have already rated security enhancements based on CEQA, and again, you all had 8 months to figure out what these implications may be. Regarding programming, data outcomes around the DSS Program and even more importantly, feedback from young people who have survived DJJ should be prioritized and shared publicly. As advocates and community members know, community based organizations can and will provide far more effective

and robust programming than Probation, given many factors such as the trust they have built with youth and their status as non-law enforcement. As Leah mentioned in her public comment, it is very difficult to write substantive public comment with so little information provided before these JJCC-JJRBG meetings. We need transparency, we need urgency, and we need these 30 young people in Kilpatrick tomorrow.