

Hayes, Kathy

From: Hansen, Mary Ann
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 9:35 AM
To: COB
Subject: Public Comment on Item H2 on BOS Agenda 6/2/2020

Good morning. I would like to submit the following Public Comment on the Board of Supervisors' 06/02/2020 Agenda item H.2: Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget, Attachment V, Section D: Health and Human Services, page D20.

I want to begin by expressing deep appreciation to the Board of Supervisors and CAO staff for their thoughtful consideration of the many conflicting needs of Humboldt County residents during these difficult and uncertain times of high needs and limited resources.

The CAO's office has recommended not rolling over \$132,045 for the DHHS/First 5 Humboldt Coordinated response to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). A significant number of events and activities designed to reduce and prevent ACEs had to be postponed due to social distancing/COVID 19 pandemic concerns. Many of these activities were small grant projects operated by local non-profit organizations for the benefit of our local children and families.

I recognize the deep fiscal impact the County is and will be experiencing during this devastating economic downturn. First 5 Humboldt's mental health clinicians who are working online with families with young children are reporting unprecedented levels of stress among these families—the combinations of financial pressure, unemployment, lack of child care, stress and family turmoil have become a toxic mix to which families are scrambling to respond. The effects on children will be long-lasting. How deep those effects will be depends on our ability to respond to those many conflicting needs.

As you, the Board, weigh the many requests that will be brought to you this budget cycle and the next, I urge you to not forget the children and our shared commitment to prevention and family strengthening. First 5 Humboldt stands as your proud partner in praising the innovative investments you have made and respectfully requesting that you continue those investments as we work through these challenging times. At a statewide conference a few months ago, California's Surgeon General praised Humboldt County in strong terms for its forward-thinking actions by making the reduction of ACEs a priority. When you make your decisions, I trust that you will continue to keep our children's health and well-being in mind. Humboldt's future health and well-being depends on it.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Hansen
Executive Director
First 5 Humboldt