
From: Bill Woodruff <bill@billwoodruff.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:53 PM
To: BOS-Clerk of the Board
Subject: bosone@edcgov.us
Attachments: BoS statement woodruff v2.docx

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Kim,

Attached are my comments I presented this afternoon in the open session. Please include the comments in the record, and copy to Council.

Thanks, Bill Woodruff.

July 30, 2024

My name is Bill Woodruff, I'm a resident of District 1.

I'd like to address the BoS on the topic of Syringe Exchange Programs (SEPs). My statement is not to discuss the validity of these programs or of comments made justifying the ban of SEPs instituted by this county; other folks will talk to that.

California law has established provisions for Syringe Exchange Programs which apply statewide. In August of 2019, Sierra Harm Reduction began operation in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county.

On December 12, 2023, the BoS approved Ordinance 5189, prohibiting the establishment, operation, use, and/or participation in a syringe exchange program within the unincorporated areas of the County. This ordinance appears to directly contradict California law. Subsequently, the state has sued the county.

My request is for the BoS to comply with state law, and to enter negotiations with the State to mitigate the cost and impact of the ongoing legal actions. Perhaps a new ordinance nullifying 5189 (and 5188) would be appropriate. Or, lean on a provision in 5189 outlined below. Not sure how this could be triggered, but it appears quite applicable.

Sec. 9.56.050. - Conformance to law.

The provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted in accordance with otherwise applicable State and Federal law(s) and will not apply if determined by the County to be in violation of any such law(s).

How this issue is resolved is beyond the scope of a public comment, but I encourage the Board to seek a resolution that complies with established law and does not rack up large legal bills we should not be saddled with.

Thank you for your attention.

Bill Woodruff.

From: Wendy Lucas Wood <wendylucaswood@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 9:30 PM
To: bosfour-old@edcgov.us
Cc: BOS-District II; BOS-Clerk of the Board; BOS-District I; BOS-District III; BOS-District V
Subject: Comments today re Syringe Exchange
Attachments: Syringe Exchange Issue BOS 73024.docx

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I'm attaching a copy here in the body of the email and also as an attachment from my comments today, to be placed in the record. I am also copying Kim asking her to please distribute your Open Forum comments to all board members, CAO Schmidt, and County Council Livingston. That way it most officially becomes part of the record.

July 30, 2024

Good afternoon. My name is Wendy Wood and I've been a resident of El Dorado County for over 20 years in District 4. I'm here to speak about the discontinuation of the syringe exchange harm reduction program that the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors approved, drawing litigation from the State of California. I've spent a good part of my career working in Public Health - locally, in California, and nationally. I've been involved with many programs for high-risk individuals and would like to speak about the public health implications of the decision you made. Scientific and public health data matters. Here are a few key points:

1. Findings reported in 2023 by the National Institute of Health suggest the population size of People Who Inject Drugs has substantially grown in the past decade and recommend that prevention services for these folks should be proportionally increased (NOT decreased).
2. Data also demonstrates that drug addiction impacts people in all walks of life, across all socioeconomic groups. The same is true here in EDC.
3. The Center for Disease Control has consistently shown that participants in syringe exchange programs are more likely to enter drug treatment programs and more likely to *stop* injecting drugs.
4. State public health officials credit the Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition with saving the lives of 421 people in El Dorado County who would have otherwise overdosed on opioids.
5. Arguing that we have low rates of HIV and Hep C and thus need to discontinue syringe exchange is antithetical to how Public Health works. These lower rates demonstrate the effectiveness of syringe exchange programs rather than a need to discontinue them. It's Public Health 101... prevention decreases risk and use. Maybe El Dorado County should consider celebrating the success of this program rather than trying to eliminate it.
6. Without needed prevention and intervention programs such as syringe exchange, people who are at risk of overdosing inevitably end up in expensive emergency rooms, thereby transitioning the health care and financial burden of providing services to our local health care systems. There are both financial and political implications here as well.

I urge you to take into consideration the broad implications of your decision and base that decision on well documented scientific data and public health expertise. I also urge you to not be swayed by politics, but by your responsibility to do the right thing for the citizens of EDC. Thank you.

Wendy Wood

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Thank you.

Wendy Wood
BOS District 4