

We are educators, therapists, social workers, lawyers, coaches, youth and retirees who live throughout El Dorado County and who work with youth who are, or at risk of becoming, involved with the juvenile justice authorities. Each of us has been appointed by the Presiding Juvenile Judge of the El Dorado Superior Court due to our knowledge of and experience in working with these youth. Although commissioners are appointed by the Court, the Commission actually falls under the auspices of the Board of Supervisors. The purpose of this Commission is to investigate, advise and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, the court system and the probation department regarding the administration of the juvenile court law in our county.¹ In addition, we are tasked with the job of coordinating governmental and nongovernmental organizations engaged in activities designed to prevent juvenile delinquency.²

With the recent election of new supervisors, it is possible that not all Board members were aware that this Commission exists. Moreover, it is likely that the Board was not aware that we have had multiple discussions regarding the closure of the Division of Juvenile Justice, the designation of the Juvenile Treatment Center as a regional hub and the opportunities created by the funding streams that are now available to our County as a result of S.B. 823.

We are aware of the decision by the Board of Supervisors on May 18, 2021 not to move forward with obtaining grant funding for infrastructure improvements to the Juvenile Treatment Center. The grant would have benefitted El Dorado youth because all detained youth would have been able to take advantage of the facility and therapeutic improvements. The grant would also have obligated this County to accept appropriate out of county youth who have offended sexually into the facility for treatment.

Throughout the last year, many of us dedicated hours of our time to the question of whether providing treatment to out of county youth was a worthwhile venture and in the best interests of our own youth. Moving forward, we are hopeful that you will call upon us for our advice on similar issues of such importance. To be frank, there may be consequences to the decisions which the Board of Supervisors makes that are unforeseen by the Board or that are unintended.

We are here to help and look forward to doing so in the future.

¹ Welfare and Institutions Code section 229.

² Welfare and Institutions Code section 233.