



CITY OF OAKLAND

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COUNCILMEMBER LOREN TAYLOR
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AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Date: May 6, 2021
To: Oakland City Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Loren Taylor
Subject: May 2021 Mental Health Awareness Month

Colleagues on the City Council:

Since 1949, the Month of May has been officially recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month. While it is critical that as a Council, we acknowledge the importance of mental health and uplift the challenges faced by Oakland residents, it is imperative for us to act when we see there is a need for a system change.

The inadequacies of Alameda County's mental healthcare services system and the resources that are available to Alameda County residents have been the subject of many recent critiques and analyses from Oakland-based mental health professionals and community members. Most recently, the Reimagining Public Safety Taskforce, for which I served as co-chair, identified the inadequacy of mental health services and the need for strengthening the provision of more accessible, comprehensive, and robust mental health services in Oakland. Since, Oakland residents comprise the majority of Alameda County residents, Oakland residents are experiencing the most pain and detrimental effects of a broken mental health system.

In addition, the Justice Department recently concluded, based upon a thorough investigation, that there is reasonable cause to believe that Alameda County is violating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in its provision of mental health services, and that conditions and practices at the County's Santa Rita Jail violate the U.S. Constitution and the ADA.

The following Resolution proclaims May 2021 as Mental Health Awareness Month in the City of Oakland and also calls on Alameda County to fully invest in implementing all of the recommendations contained in the April 22, 2021 Report from the United States Department Of Justice Civil Rights Division entitled, Investigation of Alameda County, John George Psychiatric Hospital, and Santa Rita Jail

I respectfully ask for your support of this important legislation.

Yours in Service,

Loren Taylor
Councilmember District 6