

City of Half Moon Bay Latino Council
Yanira Serrano Presente! Program

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for your support of the recent outcry in the wake of the killing of George Floyd and against excessive use of force. The Latino Council stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and as you have noted, our city needs to be a welcoming, and as Mayor Eisen said a, “safe place for all people – no matter their color, religion, national origin, socio-economic standing, gender, sexual orientation, or immigration status.” As members of the Latino Council and residents of the Coastside, we are encouraged to have witnessed widespread support of these values, especially in the past few weeks.

Many of us recall that, in the midst of all of this, we recognized the sixth anniversary of the shooting of eighteen-year-old Yanira Serrano by a San Mateo County Deputy, on June 3, 2014. The Serrano family, wanting to keep the community safe this year, invited us to light a candle in our own homes and with prayers as they said the rosary on the anniversary. The pain of the loss of a beloved member of our community at the hands of excessive force stays with us, and also moves us to enact a program on behalf of her, and others like her, called the Yanira Serrano Program.

After the killing of Yanira, we gathered signatures from over 400 faith and community leaders to provide Crisis Intervention Training for all officers and to fund mental health first responders, to assist law enforcement in de-escalating critical situations. Out of many meetings mobilizing large groups at both City council and the Board of Supervisors, while we were heard, there was a small budget allocated to only 3 of such mental health counselors and one sheriff to work only during daytime hours for the entire county, located far from the Coastside. This is a start, but not nearly enough.

To avoid any future loss of loved ones, and in this spirit, we, the undersigned, want the City of Half Moon Bay to approve the following:

- 1) **The Yanira Serrano Presente! Program** with the following components:
 - a) **The Yanira Serrano Mental Health Program** – raising funds for mental health services in the communities on the Coastside. The program should include cultural competence training, which includes a set of skills or processes that enable mental health professionals to provide services that are culturally appropriate for the diverse population on the coast. This also includes attention to noticeable language differences, as well as how culture influences attitudes, expression of distress, and help-seeking practices. Bilingual, bicultural Spanish-English counselors are needed.

b) Yanira Serrano Community Outreach Program

Provides an **orientation of all new sheriff deputies** on the Coastside to meet with community leaders and Spanish-speaking and resident families to have a closer in-person connection with officers that get to know the community well. If we know of all the good people and work going on in our community, we are less likely to react out of prejudice and fear.

c) Resource Line

A bilingual call line to offer resources, report positive interactions or abuses by authorities with procedures to work with the city of HMB and Sheriff for follow up on each compliment and complaint.

2) Include in the City's contract with the SMC Sheriff, the following:

- **Adoption of the "Eight Can't Wait" policies** that can reduce killings by police and save lives. The SMC Sheriff has approved of 2 of the 8 measures. The other six (bans chokeholds and strangleholds; requires de-escalation; requires exhaust all alternatives before shooting; ban shooting at moving vehicles, has a use of force continuum; and requires comprehensive reporting) need to be approved.

Our pain can be put into prevention and policies that unify us to be able to say, "never again" in the name of Half Moon Bay.

We anxiously await your adoption of the Yanira Serrano Presente Program, the time is now, we are the ones.

Thank you,

Latino Council (signatures)

Residents of the Coastside (signatures)