



April 15, 2024

Re: Proposed Changes in County Executive Duties Regarding IOLERO

Dear Board of Supervisors:

The Community Advisory Council of IOLERO has reviewed the proposed changes to the County Administrator's title and duties as reflected in item 11 of the BOS April 16, 2024 consent calendar. The CAC is surprised and concerned that the proposal, among other things, states that the new County Executive "supervises" the IOLERO Director position. Although such a change may be well-intended, or may be an oversight, the CAC strongly opposes any such change. *The fix is simple: remove any reference to the IOLERO Director from the changes to the County Administrator/Executive's duties.*

By overwhelmingly passing Measure P Sonoma County voters demanded and created a fully independent and professional law enforcement watchdog office. Independent is its first word, its power, and its organizing principle. Effective law enforcement oversight requires true independence from elected officials and an appointed executive.

Measure P is the law in Sonoma County. The measure demands independence throughout, but most clearly in Section 2.394, defining the "Powers and Duties" of IOLERO. Subsection (b) requires that the Director's law enforcement oversight, investigation, audit and reporting "*shall be exercised at the discretion of the director*" and subject only to "adequate staffing and resources to support" that mission. IOLERO is *not* to be under the "supervision" of the County Executive as the current

proposal envisions -- or under any supervision. The bases for governance of the IOLERO Director are listed in Measure P: the Board has the power to audit IOLERO, and the power to remove the Director pursuant to 4/5ths vote. Otherwise, the Director may employ the powers and duties of the office at his or her discretion. The County Executive simply cannot play a role in guiding policy for the independent watchdog created by Measure P. Moreover, the proposed changes risk poisoning public perception of IOLERO's independence.

The CAC cannot help but believe that it was a simple oversight to include the IOLERO Director in the new, long list of department heads to be "supervised" by the County Executive. IOLERO is not part of a County "team." IOLERO's Director is independent. Any outside "supervision" or "policy direction" of IOLERO is antithetical and even destructive to the independence demanded by Measure P, by Sonoma County voters, and by any objective analysis of the demands and requirements of this crucial office.

The people of Sonoma County spoke loud and clear through Measure P; they voted for a truly independent law enforcement oversight professional who controls the office, the staff and the direction of IOLERO. Please respect that message from the community. The CAC urges each Supervisor to oppose this change by proposing a simple fix: remove the IOLERO Director from any listing of the County Executive's powers and duties. Measure P and the voters demand that the independent law enforcement authority they created remain fully independent.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Lorena Barrera, CAC Chair