

Testimony to the Board of Supervisors – FY 2017 Budget  
Gary Ambrose, Chairman  
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board  
*April 7, 2016*

I am Gary Ambrose, Chairman of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board. In FY2015, the CSB provided almost 230,000 face-to-face services to nearly 22,000 people of all ages with mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am here today with my Board colleagues, Lori Stillman and Suzette Kern, to thank you for your strong support and partnership and to bring to your attention several challenges that we must address in the coming fiscal year.

The first is the **opioid epidemic**:

CSB is on the front lines of the battle to save lives as our community and our nation face an epidemic of heroin and opiate use. We know from the numbers of people coming to us for help that our community has a desperate need for detoxification and treatment services. These individuals are in medical need; we can't stress that enough.

Unfortunately, there is a wait time for our detoxification services. Over the past year, the average waiting time has been 13 days for medical detoxification and 20 days for suboxone treatment. Each month, on average, more than 50 people must wait for these services. Some cannot wait; untreated individuals often end up either in jail or in hospitals.

CSB also provides -- free of charge -- a course that trains people on what to do if they are with someone who is overdosing. And, other new, innovative ideas are on the horizon, but implementing these ideas will require dollars and trained personnel. CSB needs additional resources to provide community counseling, detoxification services, and associated Medication Assisted Treatment to help counter rising heroin and prescription drug abuse in our community.

The second challenge facing our community is the high number of people in our jail who need mental health treatment, rather than incarceration:

**Diversion First** is a collaborative effort that offers alternatives to incarceration for people with mental illness or intellectual or developmental disabilities who come into contact with law enforcement for low level crimes. In lieu of being taken to

jail, such individuals may be brought to the Merrifield Crisis Response Center for assessment and possible treatment. From January 1 through March 24, 2016, the MCRC served 859 people (some were seen more than once); 327 of them had been transported there by law enforcement. Of those 327, one hundred could have been arrested, but were diverted to the MCRC instead. The FY2017 Advertised Budget includes \$7.5 million dollars to implement recommendations of the Ad Hoc Police Commission, including Diversion First. As part of a three-year implementation, CSB estimates that it will require at least \$2.4 million dollars in FY2017 to successfully implement the Sequential Intercept model, providing diversion-focused treatment and supports.

The third challenge we bring to your attention involves our workforce. Due to the high cost of living in Fairfax County and the highly specialized skills required, CSB is experiencing challenges hiring and retaining staff in several strategic areas, including our emergency and mobile crisis services, intellectual and developmental disability support coordination, and youth behavioral health services. In addition, we project that 26 percent of CSB's workforce will be eligible for retirement by the year 2020. The CSB is absorbing a salary increase of two million dollars (\$2.0 million) in FY2017 that will help us retain and recruit psychiatrists and emergency services workers. These highly trained professionals work in a mandated service area, responding to individuals in crisis. The county executive included \$1.25 million dollars in the FY2018 budget, but this will not fully fund the cost of the salary increases. Without full funding in FY2018, service reductions may have to occur.

My Board colleague, Lori Stillman, will address the next challenge.

**Testimony Before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
on the Proposed FY 2017 Budget**

**by Lori Stillman,**

**Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Member**

**April 7, 2016**

Good afternoon! I am Lori Stillman, a CSB Board member and the parent of a delightful young man with intellectual disabilities - my son, Tyler. A primary goal of every parent is to have their child grow up to live a meaningful and productive life. When you have a child with disabilities, this goal often seems daunting, if not unattainable. However, thanks to your support and compassion over the years, hundreds of individuals and their families have been able to reach and celebrate this significant goal. We are deeply grateful that once again, funding has been included in the proposed budget to provide employment and day services for our upcoming special education graduates. Having these services provides them with the essential daily structure that they need, along with the enjoyment and fulfillment necessary to live a life like yours and mine.

Today I would like to address some upcoming challenges that the CSB is facing in serving persons with disabilities. The state Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) is amending the Medicaid Waiver system with the changes becoming effective on July 1, 2016. The waiver redesign combines the intellectual and developmental waivers into one system with the CSB's becoming the single point of entry, resulting in an expansion of the CSB's role, oversight responsibility, and number of individuals served. While many unanswered questions remain, we do anticipate an enormous increase in individuals qualifying for and seeking new services through the CSB and with our community partners after July 1 due to an expanded eligibility definition in the new waivers. The CSB will also be responsible for managing services for more than 1,600 individuals on current waiver waiting lists, who will receive waivers and new services over the next five years as required by the U.S.

Department of Justice Settlement Agreement. It is estimated that our CSB will need 26 additional support coordinators to meet this mandate of implementing new community care coordination requirements, and to help individuals and families navigate the complex world of available funding and supports. The inclusion of funding for 4 support coordinators in the proposed FY 2017 budget is a start, but it is clearly not enough – we need another 22 positions to close the gap. If the gap is not closed, the CSB will be forced to make very difficult policy decisions, with the outcomes felt by those who receive our supports across and throughout the entire spectrum of services. It's not just about those 22 positions; it's about all of the individuals and families that we serve.

While we have successfully moved 89 individuals from the Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC) into the community and officially closed the Center, it is critical to note that current waivers cover only about two-thirds of the cost of their needed services, especially for many of them who are very medically fragile. In addition, as other training centers in the state close, we anticipate that many of those residents from the Fairfax area are likely to return and also require our services. Since future state funding remains unclear, we need your help and continued support.

Thank you again for your partnership and for the opportunity to share our future funding needs.

Testimony to the Board of Supervisors – FY 2017 Budget  
Suzette Kern, Vice Chair  
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board  
*April 7, 2016*

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Good afternoon, I am Suzette Kern, Vice Chair of the CSB Board. Our Board deeply appreciates your strong commitment to help the thousands among us who experience mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Today I want to talk with you about the important issue of behavioral health services for our youth.

As the county's youth survey consistently demonstrates, many children in our community are in crisis. They have issues with depression, anxiety and substance use disorders. To address this, the CSB has taken a prevention and intervention approach. This year, we are providing \$23.1 million dollars in youth and family services. The FY2017 advertised budget again reflects this commitment, with proposed expenditures of \$23.6 million. I want to take a moment to talk about some of these critical services, and the gaps that exist in providing care.

In 2015, we worked with PRS/CrisisLink to offer a texting option for our community's suicide crisis hotline. Information about this service is prominently posted in every Fairfax County high school and middle school, and on school websites. The crisis text line has proven to be popular. Last year, of the thousands of texts received, nearly 1500 were ACTIVE suicide texts requiring further action which included follow up and connecting callers with first responders and counseling. In 2016, we were able to fund this life-saving service using one-time balances of approximately \$100,000. Funding is not included in the 2017 advertised budget to continue this service.

We have also been funding an interactive web-based training to help prevent youth suicide. Over 20,000 people have taken the training – 92 percent of whom were teachers. This highly effective training is also now required training for teachers in our schools. The FY 2017 advertised budget does not include the \$80,000 required

to continue this training. We can absorb the cost of this program in FY 2017 but future year funding is needed if this critical service is to continue.

As you've heard in previous testimony, there is a tremendous gap for providing timely behavioral healthcare services to our youth. Every licensed CSB youth clinician serves an average of 60 young people a year with serious emotional disabilities. There is no more capacity to serve additional youth on an outpatient basis. Additional staff is needed to fill this critical gap in serving youth in our community who experience both substance abuse and mental health issues.

Again, we thank you for your continued support. We know that each year difficult funding decisions must be made. Your steady fiscal leadership in managing taxpayer dollars instills confidence in us all.