

MidCoast Community Council

An elected Municipal Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Serving 12,000 coastal residents
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April 9, 2003

Via Email & Fax: 2 Pages

To: San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Legislative Subcommittee:
Supervisors Mark Church, Jerry Hill and Mike Nevin
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
FAX: (650) 5991027

cc: President Rose Jacobs Gibson, and Supervisor Rich Gordon

Dear Supervisors:

At our regular meeting of March 12, 2003, the MidCoast Community Council voted 5-1 with 1 abstention to submit our resolution concerning the USA PATRIOT Act to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. A copy of this resolution is attached.

At that time, we also resolved to develop a follow-up letter with recommendations in relation to this resolution. Our understanding is that this matter is to be taken up by your Board's Legislative Subcommittee on April 22, 2003. In keeping with the spirit of our resolution and our concern for community safety from acts of terrorism and the preservation of civil liberties for all San Mateo County residents, we would like to suggest that the following issues and actions be considered:

- 1 Affirmation of the County's strong support for fundamental constitutional rights and its opposition to federal measures that infringe on civil liberties.
2. Affirmation of the need for continued strong protection of our State and national borders, while maintaining support for the rights of immigrants and opposition to measures that single out individuals for legal scrutiny or enforcement activity based on their country of origin.
3. Time and resources permitting, an initial overview analysis should be prepared by County Counsel and, if necessary, by the County Manager's office, on the implications of this resolution – both in legal and budgetary considerations and in benefit to the protection of the rights of residents of the county.
4. Work with the Sheriff's Department of the County of San Mateo to support their continued protection of individual civil rights, including protection from un-warranted surveillance, unnoticed detention, or collection of personal information contrary to protected Constitutional Rights.
5. Establishing notification in public facilities (i.e., schools and libraries) where information of personal activities may be given to federal agencies without the facility's or individual's permission or notification.

6. Expression of concern that much of the information collected and actions authorized by the PATRIOT ACT will not be released to the public or local authorities, and that the impacts on county residents can never be evaluated. We would hope that the Board would agree that this sort of information should be supplied by request to local jurisdictions.

We believe the preservation of civil rights and liberties is essential to the well-being of a democratic society; and that federal, state and local governments should protect the public from terrorist attacks such as those that occurred on September 11, 2001 and should do so in a rational and deliberative fashion to ensure that new security measures will enhance public safety without impairing constitutional rights or infringing on civil liberties.

Many other jurisdictions throughout the State and the Country, in passing resolutions like this one, have developed specific actions and directives for their areas. This information is easily accessible from the various governmental agencies and websites for the meeting of your subcommittee.

Respectfully,

Sandy Emerson
Chair, MidCoast Community Council

cc: San Mateo County Sheriff Don Horsley
City Council of Pacifica
City Council of Half Moon Bay