



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**DISTRICT** 5  
**File #:** 24-066

Board Meeting Date: 1/30/2024

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Supervisor David J. Canepa, District 5  
**Subject:** Resolution Declaring Loneliness a Public Health Crisis

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution declaring loneliness a public health crisis in the County of San Mateo.

**BACKGROUND:**

Loneliness has been identified as a significant public health crisis by the United States Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy. The Surgeon General Advisory underscores the adverse effects of loneliness on mental, physical, and societal health. San Mateo County has witnessed a rise in residents experiencing isolation, with 45% expressing difficulty in 2022.

This resolution acknowledges the multifaceted nature of loneliness, considering intersectionality, race, and ethnicity. It recognizes the diverse composition of the community, with 35.2% of residents born outside the country, emphasizing the vulnerability of older immigrants to loneliness.

Furthermore, the resolution aligns with the Surgeon General's Advisory on Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation, providing a comprehensive framework for a National Strategy to Advance Social Connection. It emphasizes six foundational pillars, including strengthening social infrastructure, enacting pro-connection public policies, mobilizing the health sector, reforming digital environments, deepening knowledge, and cultivating a culture of connection.

**DISCUSSION:**

By adopting this resolution, the Board of Supervisors acknowledges the importance of addressing loneliness as a critical public health concern. It commits to implementing evidence-based strategies outlined in the Surgeon General's Advisory, focusing on the six foundational pillars. This includes initiatives to strengthen social infrastructure, enact pro-connection public policies, mobilize the health sector, reform digital environments, deepen knowledge through research, and cultivate a culture of connection.

Recognizing the impact of loneliness on various demographic groups, the resolution underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as the Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults (SILO) Act. The Board pledges to work collaboratively with stakeholders, community organizations, and residents to implement these strategies and create a more resilient and connected community.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None