

Wed 5/6/2020 4:17 PM

Holly Osborne [REDACTED]

Dear CEHD and Regional Council:

I would like these comments read aloud (CEHD May 7 (at 9:00AM)), and I would like to say them myself, at the Regional Council meeting, where I will dial in over the phone. (If you have a number at CEHD where I can dial in and speak myself, that would be fine. I am confused as to whether I am actually allowed to do this.)

Thank you very much.
Holly Osborne
Resident, Redondo Beach
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Good Morning.

My name is Holly Osborne, I am a private citizen in Redondo Beach, which is in Los Angeles County.

I hope the mayor of Los Angeles is listening to this, as well as the members of the board.

Mr. Mayor, I have listened to you every afternoon promptly at 5:15 for weeks now. Your presence is re-assuring in this time of crisis, and you have been lauded (rightly so) from coast to coast for your handling of the COVID crisis in the city of LA , and by extension to the County of LA. You have kept LA from turning into New York City, and for that everyone in this room should be deeply grateful to you. I am. Thank you.

If you read the *New York Times*, there was an article on April 14 why LA is different from New York, and why the crisis is not as bad as in New York, awful as it is. (An excerpt is included at the bottom, Note 1.)

One reason is that our culture and the type of jobs we have here are more suitable to working at home than New York. If more people working at home becomes the new norm, then there is not the need for commuting.

However, a key reason was that LA is less dense than New York. **And a virus loves density.**

- We see that in nursing homes
- We see that on cruise ships

- We see that in prisons
- We see that on Aircraft carriers

Two months ago at the CEHD meeting in March, I explained that the current RHNA formula does not work well for dense cities; the more dense the city, the more inappropriate the formula, because it assumes you can build (increase density) indefinitely. From a purely mathematical sense, this is not realizable.

I asked in March if the denser counties could have a separate formula; but I also suggested that the total number of RHNA could be reduced. It was voted 25-14 by the CEHD to consider those possibilities. My primary motive for suggesting these revisions was a sense of fairness, and to restore trust in the RHNA process for LA and Orange Counties. [You recall that the initial RHNA methodology was approved on Oct 7 by the RHNA subcommittee, and reaffirmed on Oct 21 by CEHD. The sudden switch in methodology of Nov. 7, to a formula which is detrimental to cities that are more dense was made without input from many affected stakeholders.]

I now have another reason to ask for a revision to the formula, for all cities, and for a reduction in the RHNA. Let me explain.

Two months ago, the world, and LA County, were different.

- **On March 7**, there was one new COVID case, and 14 total cases in LA County, and no deaths.

-One month later, on **April 7**, there were 550 new cases, and 6,910 total cases in LA County.

And there were 22 new deaths, for a total of 169 deaths.

- Almost one month later still, **on May 3**, there were 781 new cases, for a total of **25,562** total cases in LA County

And there were 21 new deaths, for a total of **1229** deaths in LA county.

Where will this end? We do not know. But what we do know isthat a virus loves density.

There have also been recent articles in the *LA Times* on density; here is one:

From *LA Times* April 26, "How sprawl may have saved lives: Angelenos like low-density living. The coronavirus proves them right", by Joel Kotkin

And there have been articles and statements that the virus loves high-rises.

Mr. Mayor, if we were as dense as New York, I do not think you would have been as successful as you have been in stemming this crisis.

If we were like New York City, the number of dead would be in the tens of thousands.

Mr. Mayor, why would you want to promote excessive density at a time like this? We should modify the algorithm slightly, to (20,40,40)* instead of (0,50,50)*, so that one algorithm could be used for all the counties, but overall we should get the total RHNA down for the Southern California region. Our SCAG appears to have been unable to do this, although there have been numerous letters that the number should be in the 800,000 to 900,000 range, not the 1.34 millions range.

Mr Mayor, and all the SCAG/CEHD members: I urge you to not support the methodology which the RHNA subcommittee approved last time. Un-approve it. Some of you last time (in March) thought that modifying the algorithm in any way, or not approving it would be "sliding backwards" I submit that "sliding backwards" is a lot better than plunging headlong over a cliff.

Mr. Mayor, you have more power than anyone in this room. Use it with HCD to reduce our RHNA number.

Thank you

Holly Osborne, PhD, PE.

Redondo Beach, County of Los Angeles.

(Note: It is not necessary to read the footnotes aloud at the meeting.)

*20,40,40 means 20% dependent on growth in the model, 40% on HQTA, and 40% on jobs proximity.

*0,50,50 means 50% dependent on HQTA and 50% on jobs proximity.

The algorithm works better for really dense cities with a non-zero number in the first column. The original Oct 7 algorithm approved by SCAG had (50,25,25) . Sparse cities, which may have high growth rates due to recent construction prefer a 0 in the first column. A slight tweak to 20,40,40, together with a

model that redistributes the residuals over all the counties, and together with a reduction in RHNA would do much to restoring the integrity of the RHNA process.

Note 1. Excerpt from *New York Times* of April 14:

Why it wasn't worse: Scientists are scrambling to understand why mitigation efforts were so successful at flattening the curve in California. Some factors they cite:

- *Early social distancing.* Even before the stay-at-home orders, Californians were beginning to keep clear of one another, while New Yorkers were still packing bars and restaurants.
- *A work-from-home culture.* The practice was already commonplace in the state, spurred by the tech industry.
- *Experience with wildfires and earthquakes.* The state government has built up extensive disaster-response machinery, and people are accustomed to heeding official orders in a crisis.
- *Lower-density life.* The state's solitary car culture and suburban sprawl are usually seen as liabilities. But in this case, "the more space you have, the less probability there is for transmission," Moritz Kraemer of Oxford University said.