

ENTERPRISE-RECORD

October 13, 2020 – Letter to the Editor

An example of need for police reform

Police Reform is in the air.

Polls show that the majority of citizens support reform. That is why it is so disturbing that Chief Madden plans to form a Violence Suppression Unit (Chico E-R, (9/19/2020) assigning officers no longer needed to respond to CSU Chico students now mostly gone.

The very title raises the specter of stop and frisk, ethnic/ racial profiling and police aggression which is quite different from what the community needs and model of community policing that the chief says he supports. Would not the money spent on a VSU be better spent on an increased presence of Behavioral Health personnel, crisis and case managers and shelter/housing for our less fortunate citizens?

Yes, there has been an increase in violent crime in Chico, but less than one might expect given the serial trauma of the Oroville dam spillway disaster, the horrible Camp Fire, the viral pandemic and now the North Complex Fire with heat and smoke. I urge the Chico City Council to consider allocating more money for social services rather than increased police enforcement as a crime prevention solution.

Experience shows that this is cheaper, more effective, and restores community trust.

— *Julian Zener, Chico*