From: Arcade Willis
To: Public Comments
Subject: A demand for Buncombe county
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 2:51:26 PM

Hello,

My name is Arcade Willis, and I have worked and attended school in Buncombe county for the last four years. I am commenting to demand commissioners amend their budget to defund the county sheriffs office and detention center by at least 50%.

The county health board has acknowledge that racism is a public health crisis: we need the local effects of the pandemic to be addressed immediately, with a particular emphasis on centering the Black, Brown and Indigenous communities who are most affected by paying reparations. To even begin to address the historical and present racial injustices in our county, Buncombe county must provide affordable housing, land provisions, mental health services, rent subsidies and eviction diversion, free public transportation and restorative justice services.

To address the pandemic, the funds diverted from the sheriff's department and jail should be invested in managing COVID-19 by ending all reopening, requiring businesses to provide workers with PPE. City and county schools must choose Plan C, and refuse to return to in person learning. Buncombe county should provide free testing, masks and funds for increasing the pay and support of medical frontline workers.

Overtourism must also be addressed - all leisure travel should be shut down immediately, while the TDA and it's advertising should be abolished. The county must open hotels for houseless people, and end evictions during the pandemic. Durham county's sheriff has committed to ending evictions - Buncombe should follow suit.

Thanks,

Arcade Willis