

## Communication from Public

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**Comments for Public Posting:** Hello, My name is Sahar Pirzada and I am a Muslim American Pakistani woman and a resident of Koreatown, Los Angeles. As a trauma informed mental health professional and organizer I am strongly opposed to the approval of the \$250k Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant for the Los Angeles Police Department to expand their PATHE program. PATHE and other Countering Violent Extremism programs are based on junk science that there is a "path to radicalization" and criminalizes not only mental health but religious affiliation and political dissent. PATHE casts certain communities and social movements under suspicion of "extremism". A PATHE questionnaire obtained through a public records request asks "Do you have a religious community affiliation?" and "Do you have a political or other community affiliation?" and "Do you have animosity towards any religious, community or political group?". PATHE and CVE frameworks more broadly are a threat to political organizing and can be weaponized against movements for justice. This effort to expand PATHE coincides with the Biden administration's recently released Domestic Terrorism Strategy, which criminalizes political activity, criticism of US policies, criticism of law enforcement, religious affiliations as indicators of "Domestic Violent Extremism." The intent of the expansion of policing paradigms like Countering Violent Extremism is to neutralize political activity and repress movements, as well as any attempts to self-sustain communities and build autonomy. City Council must reject this money from the Department of Homeland Security that will be used to target dissent. A report by Dr. Nicole Nguyen details the flaws and harms of the PATHE program: [https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/mental\\_health\\_report\\_online.pdf](https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/mental_health_report_online.pdf) and organizers from multiple communities successfully fought a 2018 CVE grant from being accepted on the grounds of the CVE programs being harmful, ineffective, and a form of community policing. A report released in 2021 from the UK documents the harms and ineffectiveness of similar counter-terrorism programs where mental health professionals partner with counter-terrorism police officers: <https://www.medact.org/2021/resources/reports/racism-mental-health-and-pre-crime-policing-the-ethics-of-vulnerability-support-hubs/> . We must lead in effective culturally appropriate mental health care for vulnerable communities and avoid falling into the trap of spending funds on community policing under the guise of mental health care. Please reject the approval of the TVTP grant for LAPD.