

Domestic  
Violence

# Proposed budget cuts irk women

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SANTA CRUZ — Battered women and their children who have sought shelter at the nonprofit Mariposa House made themselves visible at the county Board of Supervisors' hearing Thursday.

At issue was a recommended cut of \$10,000 in revenue sharing funds to the Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services, the group which operates Mariposa House.

Women and children crowded the supervisor's chamber holding colorful signs which contained such moving statements as, "Every 18 Seconds a Woman is Battered" and "Support Us. No More Cuts. No More Bruises."

The demonstration was one of several the women have held in recent weeks to get the attention of supervisors and the public.

The demonstrators "include those invisible women who think this issue is so important they've made themselves visible," Barbara Burkhart, member of the Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services Board of Directors, told supervisors.

The cut is being recommended by County Administrative Officer George Newell and supervisors let it be known Thursday they never intended this program to suffer a loss in funds.

Newell is recommending that all cuts made in revenue sharing last January be carried over to fiscal year 1983-84. Since \$5,000 was cut from Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services during the mid-year budget cut session, Newell is suggesting \$10,000 be cut this next year.

This would lead the organization

with \$53,220 in revenue sharing funds. These funds, given to the county by the federal government, provide half of the organization's budget.

In cutting \$5,000 from the program in January, supervisors intended this money be made up through an increase in marriage license fees, Burkhart said. But not as many marriage licenses were sold as expected and only \$2,000 came in, leaving the program \$3,000 short.

Carried over to next year, this would mean a shortfall of \$6,000, Supervisors' Chairman Joe Cucchiara pointed out.

"We never intended to accomplish a reduction last year," Supervisor Gary Patton reminded representatives from the county administrative office.

Since "reality wasn't what was expected," and marriage license fees declined, the cut proposed by Newell is over and above what supervisors

wanted in January, Supervisor Robley Levy stated.

Supervisor E. Wayne Moore Jr. pledged he would try to get more funds for the Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services when supervisors make the final decision on revenue sharing funds during budget hearings the end of this month.

Two south county programs — Project SEW and the Watsonville International Senior Center — didn't ask for any revenue sharing funds for 1983-84, Moore said. Since these two programs received approximately \$14,000 in revenue sharing funds this year, Moore wants to see some of this unrequested \$14,000 go to Women's Crisis and Support and Shelter Services.

Maria Bautista, Mariposa House shelter coordinator, said Mariposa House would not close if revenue sharing funds are cut back in 1983-84. But it would mean possible closure of

the organization's Santa Cruz office located in the County Center.

Closure of this office would mean there wouldn't be free restraining orders available to women any longer, Bautista said. Women who are being beaten need quick access to these restraining orders to stop the abuser from contacting them.

The Santa Cruz office also is a central place for women referred by other agencies for particular needs, Bautista said.

This isn't the first loss Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services has faced. On top of the \$3,000 loss in funds this year, the group also lost its office in a county-owned building on Capitola Road. The closure of this office, a county budget saving move, caused the organization to eliminate counseling of families, battered women, and those who batter women, Bautista said.