

Alameda County Chiefs of Police & Sheriff's Association

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September 6, 2012

Honorable C. Don Clay, Presiding Judge
Alameda County Superior Court
1225 Fallon Street, Department One
Oakland, CA 94612

Subject: Response to 2011-2012 Alameda County Grand Jury Final Report

Dear Judge Clay,

This letter contains the Alameda County Chief of Police and Sheriff's Association required response to the 2011-2012 Alameda County Grand Jury Final Report, specifically recommendation 12-1 concerning crime lab consolidation in Alameda County.

Recommendation 12-1:

The Alameda County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association must meet, confer and develop a written proposal to establish one consolidated Crime Lab in Alameda County.

Response:

We disagree with the Grand Jury's recommendation.

The matter of countywide crime laboratory consolidation has been a topic of concern to the members of the Alameda County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association (ACCPA) for more than fifteen years. A standing subcommittee of our members was first formed in 1996 to discuss and analyze the efficiency and capacity of crime lab services offered throughout Alameda County. When recommendation 01-8 of the 2000-2001 Alameda County Grand Jury report called upon the *"Alameda County Sheriff, Oakland Police Chief, the District Attorney (and) the Chiefs of Police of all other cities in Alameda County...(to) immediately form a working group to study the feasibility of constructing a combined law enforcement crime laboratory in*

Alameda County" our standing crime lab committee became that working group. In spite of this association's previous studies and analyses of lab services, no substantive outcomes related to crime lab consolidation have resulted.

Alameda County's law enforcement leaders remain committed to regional cooperation and improving all aspects of crime laboratory services. We find that the current backlog of forensics testing requests documented by the Grand Jury is wholly unacceptable; however the Grand Jury has erroneously concluded "*the Alameda County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association is well placed to develop a lab consolidation plan that addresses a governance model representing the needs of all entities.*" Despite having previously posited an existing governance model (i.e. RAN/CAL-ID), after lengthy discussion of this topic among our members, it was generally agreed that although consolidation of crime lab services may be beneficial, and a wide range of complexities might be overcome, costs would certainly be vast and prohibitive in the current financial environment. Moreover, the majority of our association members are simply consumers of forensic lab services: the will to consolidate our current public safety crime labs must first be present in those who operate the labs. That desire to consolidate will certainly be directly correlated with receiving requisite funding. Without political support for consolidation and political leadership supporting the establishment of consistent and reliable funding, any endeavor to implement regional consolidation of crime lab services will remain an unfulfilled vision (as the last decade has demonstrated). For the reasons detailed above, I regretfully must respond that the recommendation will not be implemented by this association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike McQuiston", written in a cursive style.

Chief Mike McQuiston
Albany Police Department
ACCPSA President