



City of Buellton

June 18, 2007

The Honorable Judge Rodney Melville
Santa Barbara County Superior Court
312-M East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93455-5165

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report – Law, Justice and Public Safety: Selected Community Challenges

Dear Judge Melville:

Please be advised that the City of Buellton contracts with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services and therefore has no specific knowledge as to the issues addressed in the Grand Jury Report entitled *Law, Justice and Public Safety: Selected Community Challenges*. The City is therefore responding on a limited basis in providing the following comments:

Finding 1

Greater use of medium security detention facilities, staffed by law enforcement and clinical experts, could reduce jail overcrowding and provide more humane treatment for some segments of the inmate population.

Response to Finding 1

The City of Buellton agrees with Finding 1.

Finding 2

Allegations of negligent or improper treatment of inmates in the Main Jail could not be verified but such claims were not isolated.

Response to Finding 2

The City of Buellton does not have evidence to support or refute the allegations stated in Finding 2.

Finding 3

The influence of gang activity in the detention system is pernicious and its impact on the growth of neighborhood gangs may increase if not checked.

Response to Finding 3

The City of Buellton agrees with Finding 3.

Finding 4

The California Civil Code (1714.1 & 1714.3) prescribes the liability of parents or guardians for the misconduct of children within their custody and control.

Response to Finding 4

The City of Buellton agrees with Finding 4.

Finding 5

There is a growing disregard for traffic laws and this can contribute to disregard for the law in general.

Response to Finding 5

The City of Buellton generally agrees with Finding 5.

Recommendation 1

Develop more medium security detention facilities as alternates to incarceration in the Main Jail.

Response to Recommendation 1

The City of Buellton agrees that the development of more medium security detention facilities as alternates to incarceration in the Main Jail is one method of dealing with the overcrowding of the Main Jail.

Recommendation 2

Authorize and fund a court appointed ombudsman who is beholden neither to detention authorities nor to inmate advocacy groups and who is devoted to evaluating and reporting on complaints.

Response to Recommendation 2

The City of Buellton agrees that the authorization and funding of a court appointed ombudsman is one method of evaluating and reporting on complaints.

Recommendation 3

Implement a sustainable educational program on the negative impact of gang activity, involving law enforcement and the education experts, focusing on children in K-8 and including outreach to parents.

Response to Recommendation 3

The City of Buellton agrees with Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 4

The District Attorney should proactively inform parents or guardians that under the provisions of the California Civil Code they are liable for the misconduct of their children.

Response to Recommendation 4

The City of Buellton agrees with Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 5

Place greater emphasis on enforcement and implement a public awareness program regarding the bad habits of drivers and bicyclists.

Response to Recommendation 5

The City of Buellton agrees with Recommendation 5.

The City of Buellton appreciates the opportunity to respond to this Grand Jury Report. A copy of the Report has been sent to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department for a response from the "Police Chief, City of Buellton" as the Sheriff, by contract, is the City's Police Chief.

Sincerely,


Steven L. Thompson
City Manager

c: Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury Foreman
Buellton City Council