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## **Grand Jury Releases Report on November '14 Elections Process**

The 2014-2015 Ventura County Grand Jury has released its first report of the current fiscal year, titled "Elections and Polling Place Observations." Viewing and commenting on the county's election procedures is regularly included in the government watchdog's oversight duties.

On the last election day, Nov. 4, 2014, the grand jury monitored county polls by conducting unannounced observations of polling places and by observing the county clerk and recorder/registrar of voter's central counting place in the county center. In preparation for their observations, 12 grand jurors attended the three-hour "Election Officer Training Course" presented by the county's Elections Division.

Grand jury members used checksheets to record their observations of polling place conditions and poll worker performance. An analysis of these checksheets shows that the jurors rated most polling places as clean and in good repair, with acceptable lighting and noise levels, properly set-up voting booths, readily accessible voting materials and welcoming and knowledgeable poll workers. The grand jury found that variations from normal ballot procedures were understood and handled well by poll workers.

In its report, the grand jury recommends that the Elections Division reduce possible confusion by locating only one polling place in a single building. Where multiple precincts are located in a single polling place, the Elections Division should take steps to instruct poll workers to clearly separate the precincts and prevent votes from being cast in an incorrect precinct.

The report also recommends possible revisions to the Elections Division's training, including increasing the length of the course, emphasizing the need for proper signage (particularly bilingual signage), and providing additional hands-on training in the setup and use of electronic voting machines.

(more)

The grand jury report commends the Elections Division for its hard work in training poll workers and for providing technical support on election day. The grand jury also commends poll workers for the long hours they spent ensuring that all county voters were afforded the opportunity to vote. Further commendations went to the county clerk and recorder/registrar of voters for his efforts to certify the election results well in advance of the date prescribed by California law.

The complete report may be accessed at <http://www.ventura.org/grand-jury>; click on the “Annual Reports” tab and consult “Fiscal Year 2014-2015.”

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