

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
CLERK AND RECORDER:

County Clerk
Clerk, Board of Supervisors
Registrar of Voters
Recorder



RICHARD D. DEAN
COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER

ELECTIONS DIVISION

BRUCE A. BRADLEY
Assistant Registrar of Voters
Hall of Administration
Lower Plaza, L #1200
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

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April 3, 1997

FILED

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RICHARD D. DEAN, County Clerk
By Diane Ellis Deputy

The Honorable Robert C. Bradley
Presiding Judge
Ventura County Superior Court
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Re: Response to the 1996-97 Grand Jury First Final Report

Dear Judge Bradley:

This attached response to the 1996-97 Grand Jury First Final Report is submitted pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933(c).

This was the most comprehensive and detailed Grand Jury monitoring that the Elections Division has ever received. It covered all phases of the election process with special emphasis on the outstanding work of hundreds of dedicated precinct officers who all too often go unrecognized and unappreciated.

I want to thank the Grand Jury for their time and interest and for the brief spotlight they have focused on the efforts this office makes to conduct elections in Ventura County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard D. Dean".

Richard D. Dean
County Clerk and Recorder

RDD:rdd

Attachment

c: M.L. Koester, Chief Administrative Officer

1996 PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION MONITORING

Recommendation

1. The County Clerk and Recorder, Elections Division, should make every effort to insure that adequate facilities are provided for the electorate in forthcoming elections. Under normal conditions, voters should not be required to wait outside a polling place during the voting process, especially during inclement weather conditions.

Response

The physical adequacy of polling places at grade schools has become a problem due to extreme overcrowding and new class size limits. In the November 1996 election some schools were not able to tell us ahead of time what room would be available on election day. Many schools have resorted to using a trailer as the school library and converting the original library to classrooms. We will try to work more closely with the schools to insure that trailers are not assigned as polling places and that voters are given adequate facilities.

The problem of lines at the polls is always a concern for this office. During major elections with high turnouts there will be periods of high use that temporarily overwhelm the ballot issuing process. We always encourage voters to avoid the high traffic periods of early morning and evening. We make the absentee ballot process as simple as possible to allow people to vote at home. When banks and grocery stores get busy, they open more lines. We do not have that option. The accurate and secure process of issuing and returning ballots requires some patience on the part of the voters. We will attempt to reduce the long lines in the Colonia area by moving the polling place out of Caesar Chavez school into a larger facility and increasing the number of precinct boards serving that area.

Recommendation

2. Emphasis on ballot box security (lock and seal) should be stressed to the election inspectors during the training session held preparatory to an election. Security of the ballot boxes should be of the utmost importance.

Response

All precinct inspectors receive concentrated training on polling place procedures. We will continue to emphasize the importance of sealing and locking the ballot box before transfer to the pickup stations. We will also reconfigure the ballot boxes to make it easier to both lock and seal them so as to further assist the precinct officers.