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November 16, 2011

The Honorable Vincent O'Neill, Jr.
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

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VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

**SUBJECT: GRAND JURY RESPONSES REQUIRING FURTHER ANALYSIS –
BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE**

Dear Judge O'Neill:

As requested, following are the results of our further analysis of the Grand Jury's recommendations in the above-referenced report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R-02: "The CEO-HR should create an independent hotline to receive complaints specific to improper workplace behavior that is separate from the A-C Employee Fraud Hotline. It should be staffed by non-County personnel to protect the anonymity of callers."

Response: "Recommendation numbered R-02 requires further analysis. While action to create an independent hotline rests with the CEO-HR, it should be noted that multiple hotlines can create confusion for complainants and, as a result, complainants sometimes use the Employee Fraud Hotline as a 'catchall' for various types of complaints, including those for which a separate hotline already exists. In cases where the complainant does not wish to be redirected to the other hotline, the Employee Fraud Hotline accommodates the complainant and facilitates investigation. Therefore, the Employee Fraud Hotline may continue to be involved in such personnel complaints. We will coordinate with the CEO-HR to evaluate options. It is anticipated the review will be completed by October 31, 2011."

- R-05: "The BOS should require that reports be provided periodically from the CEO-HR with detailed statistics that quantify the extent bullying occurs in the County. The data should include all complaints, as well as the number of substantiated complaints of bullying reported by specific agency and department. This information will allow the localization of a problem. Data provided should include all complaints and substantiated complaints as a function of time in order to identify trends."

Response: "Recommendation numbered R-05 requires further analysis. While the CEO-HR would report such statistics, substantiated personnel complaints facilitated by the Employee Fraud Hotline are also reported to the BOS in the semiannual Employee Fraud Hotline report. The appropriateness of CEO-HR reporting on unsubstantiated personnel complaints facilitated by the Employee Fraud Hotline requires further analysis in conjunction with the CEO-HR and County Counsel. It is anticipated the review will be completed by October 31, 2011."

RESULTS OF FURTHER ANALYSIS:

Recommendations numbered R-02 and R-05 have not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. On October 5, 2011, my representative met with the CEO-HR to discuss the concerns described in our responses to the Grand Jury's recommendations above. The CEO-HR agreed to address our concerns upon implementation of the CEO-HR Employee Conduct Hotline, which will include providing employees with information on the types of complaints to report to the various County hotlines to avoid confusion. The CEO-HR also agreed to ensure that no confidential information will be disclosed associated with referrals from our Employee Fraud Hotline.

Sincerely,



CHRISTINE L. COHEN
Auditor-Controller

cc: ✓ Foreman, Ventura County Grand Jury
Michael Powers, County Executive Officer