

OCT 17 2008

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

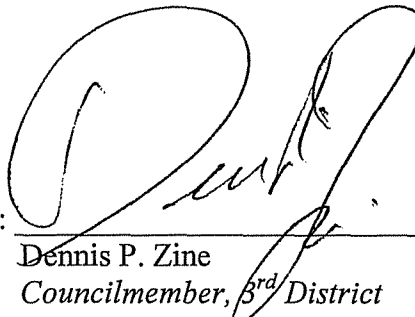
A recent internal report by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) identified serious deficiencies in the work of its Scientific Investigation Division, specifically in the area of fingerprint analysis. The problems in the Latent Print Unit were so serious that at least two individuals were wrongly implicated in crimes due to faulty fingerprint analysis. More shocking, however, was the revelation that LAPD still does not know how many other cases may have been mishandled. Furthermore, LAPD has indicated that it does not have sufficient resources to fund an audit to correct the situation.

Any doubt of the accuracy of LAPD forensic investigations poses a significant threat to the credibility of the Department and the safety of the general public. Not only can innocent people find themselves wrongly accused of crimes they did not commit, but guilty offenders may be acquitted due to faulty evidence. In order to preserve public safety and confidence, LAPD's fingerprint analysis must be beyond reproach.

While LAPD has since fired one analyst, disciplined three others, and removed two supervisors, oversight must continue to be tightened over fingerprint analysis work. The Department must be provided with the resources it needs to conduct a comprehensive audit of this unit and implement appropriate reviews.

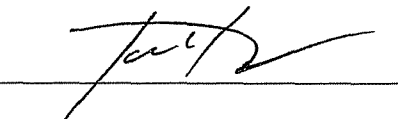
I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Police Department be requested to report immediately to the Public Safety Committee on the full extent of any problems with its fingerprint analysis that may have produced faulty evidence, including specific actions being taken to prevent such errors in the future, and a plan to conduct a comprehensive audit of the Latent Print Unit.

PRESENTED BY:


Dennis P. Zine
Councilmember, 3rd District

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SECONDED BY:


08-2822