

JAN 16 2009

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

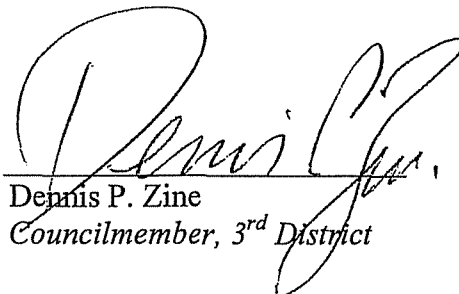
In October 2008, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) identified serious problems in the work of its Scientific Investigation Division, specifically with regard to the Latent Print Unit. This unit, which is charged with fingerprint analysis, conducted flawed investigations that resulted in at least two people being falsely accused of crimes. At that time, City Council motion 08-2822 requested the LAPD to report to the Public Safety Committee with a full accounting of the situation. In Committee, LAPD testified that the fingerprint analysts responsible for the errors had been disciplined and removed from their assignments. LAPD further acknowledged that the full extent of affected cases was not yet known, and that investigations were ongoing.

Subsequent news reports have since indicated that those same fingerprint analysts were involved in close to 1,000 other cases, which must now be reviewed. Even more troubling is the revelation that LAPD has not yet brought in outside investigators or auditors to review the faulty practices of the Latent Print Unit. In the three months that followed the original reports of errors, a multi-agency task force has been formed but has not actually met. Due to a lack of funding, the Department has relied on its own staff to review the unit. The speed, intensity, and thoroughness of this investigation have simply been inadequate.

In order to preserve public safety and confidence, LAPD's fingerprint analysis must be beyond reproach. Accordingly, the Department must be given the necessary resources to carry out a comprehensive audit of the Latent Print Unit.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Police Department be requested to present a follow-up report to the Public Safety Committee on the full extent of its review of problems with fingerprint analysis, including specific grant moneys being sought to hire outside investigators, the status of the multi-agency task force, and a plan to conduct a comprehensive audit of the Latent Print Unit.

PRESENTED BY:


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SECONDED BY:



08-2822-S1

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