[ms-0398.022.010.015]

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August 26, 1991

Board of Supervisors
County of San Diego
335 County Administration Center
San Diego, California 92101

CONFIDENTIAL

Honorable Board:

Re: Juvenile Detention Facilities

Pursuant to your direction on August 13, 1991, attached please find a proposed letter to the Honorable Pete Wilson, Governor of the State of California. Should you choose to send the letter, we recommend that it be sent from Board offices, rather than one letter signed by all Board members.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (S30)-4847 or Nathan C. Northup, Deputy County Counsel, at (S30)-4905.

Respectfully,

LLOYD M. HARMON, JR., County Counsel

By Diane Bardsley
DIANE BARDSLEY, Chief Deputy

DB:NCN:bes
Enc.

DRAFT

August 26, 1991

Governor Pete Wilson
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Wilson:

Re: Juvenile Detention Facilities

We wish to express our serious concern regarding an intrusion by the California Youth Authority into our operation of the San Diego County Juvenile Hall. The California Youth Authority has recently completed its annual inspection and has notified us of its intention to issue a citation based on the high population of our facility. The County of San Diego, like many other counties throughout the state, is experiencing a severe shortage of space in its juvenile detention facility.

Ironically, a major factor in this issue is a longstanding policy of the County of San Diego to use alternative forms of confinement other than the CYA. Nevertheless, the CYA may attempt to order the Chief Probation Officer to close the Hall 60 days after the citation is issued, unless the crowding problem is corrected. We recognize overcrowding as a pervasive problem

facing counties throughout the state, and one that you cannot individually solve. Nevertheless, your assistance is requested.

Our 37-year old facility, which we have expanded, was designed to hold over 350 juvenile detainees, most of them in two-person rooms. Standards subsequently promulgated by the California Youth Authority at Title 15 of the California Administrative Code resulted in a rating of our facility to hold only 219 youths. Although section 4276 of Title 15 is intended to "grandfather" existing Juvenile Halls, San Diego's facility was never exempted from those subsequent regulations. This "grandfathering" process is commonly applied to local adult detention facilities and should be applied to juvenile halls.

Staffing ratios, established by section 4279 of Title 15 of the California Administrative Code, require one trained staff member for every 10 minors in detention during daytime hours and 1 staff member for every 30 minors during sleeping hours. We believe these ratios are unrealistic given the configuration of the San Diego County Juvenile Hall. Title 15 requirements in other areas, e.g., plumbing, sinks, and showerheads, are also unrealistic.

We recommend that you form a commission comprised of local chief probation officers to review and rewrite Title 15 standards for Juvenile Detention Facilities, requiring local community input. This process would parallel that procedure already in

place according to Penal Code sections 6030 et seq., for standards and guidelines for local adult detention facilities. Such a commission would then be able to address, as Title 15 presently does not, the recent recognition by the State Legislature that confinement of juveniles in local juvenile halls is a legitimate rehabilitative tool. (See Welf. & Inst. Code, § 202.)

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY 1897