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SAN DIEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

JIM ROACHE, SHERIFF

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SHERIFF ROACHE DETAILS IMPACT OF $149 MILLION BOARD ORDER; JAIL CLOSURES, PATROL REDUCTIONS, HUNDREDS TO BE LAYED OFF "A DARK DAY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY"

San Diego -- Sheriff Roache today unveiled the impact of the $149.7 million budget ordered by the Board of Supervisors on August 4th. The forced reductions hit deeply into every area of law enforcement, jails, and support services; including 536 positions to be cut from the department.

"This is a very dark day for public safety. For the first time in history, we are surrendering to crime by closing jails. This mandated cut represents the biggest reduction of County law enforcement in the history of San Diego," Sheriff Roache said, "Even when the Great Depression hit (1929-1930), the Sheriff and Jails budget was cut by only 1%. This cut is 9.6% from the General Fund portion of the budget."

For 15 days, Sheriff's Department experts have calculated the operational meaning of what amounts to a $13 million cut. The public does not yet understand the seriousness of the danger -- or the depth of safety service cut -- which this budget represents. Here are the facts:

- 536 positions will be cut from the Sheriff's Department;
- Two jails will close, Central Detention and South Bay Detention, costing the County 1,123 jail beds;
- Patrol services will be cut by 33%, meaning many crimes will no longer be responded to;

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- Patrol stations in Fallbrook, Alpine, Ramona and Valley Center will close, reducing patrol capability to 1968 levels;
- ASTREA will be cut 50%, making it an emergency response operation only;
- SED will be cut 55%, reducing SWAT and high risk operations capability to dangerously low levels;
- DARE and Crime Prevention (unincorporated) will be eliminated;
- More patrol cars exceeding County maximum mileages, including many over 100,000 miles, will be on the streets;
- The Communications Center will remain seriously understaffed which will slow response to calls for help;
- Sheriff's Transportation will receive no new staffing despite the consensus that the operation is threadbare.

"The recent audit of this department confirmed what every deputy has known for years: The San Diego Sheriff's Department is chronically understaffed to perform its jail and law enforcement mandates," Sheriff Roache said, "The Department makes up for a lack of staff by using overtime. The Board had three options:

1. Add 180 more staff to eliminate use of overtime and help us live within a realistic budget,
2. Keep staff the same but fund the overtime needed to keep jails open and patrol operations status quo, or
3. Add no staff, provide limited overtime, and mandate service cuts.

<u>The Board majority chose the last, and worst, alternative. This is nothing short of the most significant public safety emergency in San Diego's history</u>."

Following a final conference with top managers, Sheriff Roache spent yesterday meeting with labor representatives (DSA and SEIU), and in telephone consultations with police chiefs and presiding judges. "All were stunned as to the magnitude of this mandated cut," Sheriff Roache said, "<u>There is no ripple effect, it is a tidal wave</u>."

The Board of Supervisors is set to hear the line-item budget one last time on September 21st.

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