

JUL 29 2009

09-1901

PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

The Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Scientific Investigation Division (SID) is responsible for testing and analyzing DNA evidence in criminal cases. Historically, SID has not had sufficient resources to test all evidence kits it receives, which has caused a tremendous backlog of cases.

Eliminating the DNA backlog will dramatically enhance public safety. DNA results are uploaded into the CODIS database, which links together local, state and federal agencies for cross-analyzing DNA profiles and identifying suspects. A "hit" is generated when an evidence kit matches a profile previously entered into CODIS. This is a very effective tool for identifying serial perpetrators who have committed multiple crimes. Reducing the backlog increases the likelihood of DNA hits being generated.

The City Council, in recognizing this need, has devoted new resources to the LAPD's budget. In 2008-09, Council provided funding and authorized 16 additional positions for DNA analysis to continue backlog reduction efforts. Council also authorized an exemption from the "hard hiring freeze" for the 26 new positions so that they can be filled immediately.

LAPD estimates that the increased staffing would cut the backlog almost in half, to approximately 2,120 cases by the end of 2009-10. LAPD also projects that if all 26 positions are filled, the backlog would be eliminated by the end of the Fiscal Year 2010-11.

Over the past few years, LAPD has regularly reported to the Public Safety Committee on its progress in reducing the DNA backlog. Given that Council has placed a high priority on DNA testing, these updates should continue regularly to ensure that backlog reduction goals are achieved and that the LAPD is hiring the necessary personnel to meet these goals.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the LAPD be instructed to report regularly to the Public Safety Committee with updates on reducing the backlog of DNA evidence kits, and include updates on total funding spent and total personnel hired.

I FURTHER MOVE that the LAPD be instructed to provide written reports to the City Council on a quarterly basis.

PRESENTED BY:


ERIC GARCETTI
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:




ORIGINAL

July 29, 2009

