



January 8, 2013

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**VIA E-MAIL**

**Julian Chang, President  
Juvenile Probation Commission  
375 Woodside Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94127**

**Re: Safety of Juvenile Probation Officers  
File No. 038546**

Dear President Chang and Juvenile Probation Commissioners:

I write on behalf of my client, the San Francisco Deputy Probation Officers' Association ("DPOA").

The first obligation of any labor organization is to ensure the safety of the employees it represents. DPOA takes that obligation with the utmost seriousness given the nature of the work carried out on a daily basis by the men and women it represents.

We have witnessed the task for many of our members become incrementally harder and more dangerous. We are particularly concerned about Field Officer Safety and the ever changing demand on probation officers as the nature and characteristics of juvenile probation work has changed.

Realignment, as Assembly Bill 109 has been called, has changed state law and resulted in many young adults returning to juvenile probation caseloads for active supervision. This has coincided with what our officers have experienced as an increasing prevalence of guns and other weapons in the hands of youthful and adult offenders in neighborhoods we are servicing. Our officers who are working, either individually or in tandem with other city public safety agencies, in areas of Visitation Valley, Bayview/Hunters Point, Mission, and Western Addition, are particularly concerned about the proliferation of such weapons and are increasingly concerned about their ability to work safely and securely in these areas.

The new laws also require our members to supervise a small but significant number of high risk offenders with histories of serious, chronic, and violent offenses. Those probation officers who have such individuals on their

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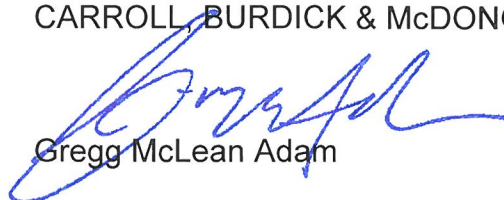
caseloads—particularly our S.O.P. Unit—are gravely concerned about how increasingly exposed they have become to significant risk and harm. It is not simply the dangers posed by the individuals directly under supervision, but also the reality that these high risk juveniles and young adults associate with chronic, serious and violent adult offenders, which makes community supervision dangerous and dramatically compromises public safety.

Based on these increased risks and dangers, DPOA is fully supportive of the plans of the Juvenile Probation Department to conduct a wholesale review of its practices relative to community supervision of high risk offenders. We believe that the primary focus of that review should be officer and public safety. We also strongly encourage the Department to determine the most practical tools and practices needed to increase field officer safety, enhance public safety, and maintain the safety and protection of juveniles in our custody during high profile transports. Renewed focus on training of officers for these new, more dangerous, situations should also be emphasized.

We are eager to work collaboratively with the Department and the City on these issues and encourage the Commission to give the Department the full weight of its support. The importance of the work of our officers to the community has never been higher; yet we must reassess how we are meeting this increased obligation and ensure that every effort is made to maximize the safety of officers.

Very truly yours,

CARROLL BURDICK & McDONOUGH LLP



Gregg McLean Adam

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cc: Armando Garcia, President, DPOA  
Bobby Uppal, Vice-President, Juvenile, DPOA