



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT

September 1, 2009

Ms. Sarah Tofte
Human Rights Watch
350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, New York 10118-3299

Dear Ms. Tofte,

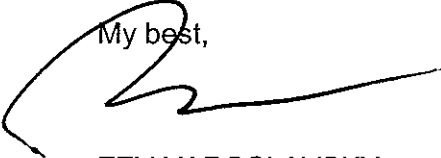
As you know, I've been determined to confront and resolve the serious problem of untested sexual assault kits within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Now, I'm pleased to report that we've achieved a significant breakthrough.

I recently met with Sheriff Lee Baca in my office on this subject. He agreed to provide \$2.3 million this fiscal year to outsource the testing of the kits and to provide an additional \$700,000 to bolster staffing in the crime lab sufficient to prevent future backlogs. Moreover, the Sheriff and I both asked the county's chief executive officer to identify an equal amount of money next fiscal year in order to completely eliminate the backlog by June 30, 2011. The chief executive officer will recommend this to the Board of Supervisors this month.

The board will also continue to provide rigorous oversight of the testing process and track any "hits" that may result from placing DNA in law enforcement databases. Women who have subjected themselves to this invasive evidentiary procedure can rest assured that the County of Los Angeles is fully committed to the pursuit of justice in their cases.

I want to thank Sheriff Baca for his cooperation, for going the extra mile in these tough budgetary times to address this important public safety priority. And I want to thank you, as well, for your unwavering commitment on behalf of rape victims.

My best,


ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Supervisor, Third District

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