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County of Mendocino
Grand Jury
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Post Office Box 629
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The Honorable Cindee F. Mayfield
Presiding Judge
Superior Court for the County of Mendocino
100 North State Street
Ukiah, CA 95482

June 30, 2009

Reference: Final Report of the 2008-09 Mendocino County Grand Jury

Dear Judge Mayfield:

Accompanying this letter is the Final Report of the 2008-09 Mendocino County Grand Jury, in fulfillment of the Grand Jury's oath and charge. This report contains the results of investigations required by law, suggested by citizen complaints, or generated by the Grand Jury itself. Complaints received late in the term have been referred to the 2009-10 Grand Jury for its consideration.

The 2008-09 Grand Jury completed 13 individual reports on many aspects of County and local government. The Jury investigated and reported on:

- The Redwood Coast Senior Center in Fort Bragg
- Implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act in Mendocino County
- The Mendocino Transit Authority
- Ukiah Police Department
- The Mendocino County Sheriff's Evidence Facility
- Fort Bragg Police Department
- The Mendocino County Sheriff's Substation and Holding Cells in Fort Bragg
- Mendocino County Jail
- Four Mendocino County Middle Schools
- Leggett Valley Unified School District
- The New Mendocino County Microwave System
- The Health and Human Services Agency
- The Relationship Between the Ukiah Valley Sanitation District and the City of Ukiah Sewer System

In addition to the above reports, members of the 2008-09 Grand Jury inquired into the condition of the County's other jail facilities and made preliminary inquiries into several citizen complaints that did not result in written reports. A task force worked throughout the year to revise the Mendocino County Grand Jury Procedure Manual, using the template produced by the California Grand Jury Association as a guide.

Jurors reviewed numerous public documents. They traveled to many distant areas of the County to tour clinics, schools, jail facilities, and government offices. They received briefings and conferred with agency and department heads to research questions and respond to citizen complaints.

Five jurors commuted from the coast to participate in committee and full panel meetings. Several others traveled from the Willits area. The wide geographic distribution of jurors contributed to the range of investigations undertaken by the panel. It also brought home the importance of setting clear priorities, managing time and working cost-effectively to make the most of every meeting and every travel dollar.

On behalf of all members of the panel, I would like to thank the Staff of the CEO's office and the Superior Court and, in particular, Judge Richard J. Henderson whose calm and measured leadership played a critical role in keeping our work on course. I would also like to thank County Counsel, Jeanine Nadel and the many county, city, special district, school district and agency employees who contributed to our efforts in so many ways.

Without this widespread willingness to support and inform us, the Grand Jury would be unable to fulfill its role of furthering transparency in government. We feel that by informing Mendocino County voters and shedding light on County and local government matters, we have heightened the public's awareness of how government functions in our county.

It has been my honor to serve as a Grand Juror for the past two years, and as the 2008/2009 Grand Jury Foreman. Those of us who will conclude our service in July 2009 will leave this role enriched by our experiences and better prepared to serve our communities. To those who will take our places, I extend warm welcome and heartfelt thanks.

Sincerely,

Finley Williams, Foreman