

## OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**JOSEPH L. SPAETH**  
PUBLIC DEFENDER

**JOSE VARELA**  
ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER

**DAVID I. BROWN**  
CHIEF DEPUTY  
**DEBRA LEYVA**  
CHIEF DEPUTY



**HALL OF JUSTICE**  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
Room 139  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 499 6321  
(415) 499 6898 FAX  
[www.co.marin.ca.us/pd](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/pd)

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: 916-445-2841  
Fax: 916-445-4633

**RE: SB 511, SB 756, SB 609 – SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

I am the Public Defender for Marin County. I strongly urge you to sign SB 511, SB 756, and SB 609 to provide protections for innocent persons accused of crimes.

My staff and I are dedicated to protecting the innocent from wrongful conviction. Yet, all too often, judges and juries are misled by poor quality evidence, including tainted eyewitness identifications, unreliable statements, and false testimony from informants. Modern DNA evidence has proved that innocent people are sent to prison for crimes they did not commit far more often than we think and certainly more often than our system should allow. These wrongful convictions frequently impact African-Americans, Latinos and low-income individuals disproportionately.

These three bills will implement reforms suggested by the non-partisan California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice. They address the most common causes of wrongful conviction. Specifically:

- Senate Bill 511, sponsored by Senator Elaine K. Alquist (D-San Jose), requires the electronic recording of police interrogation in cases involving homicides and other violent felonies.
- Senate Bill 756, sponsored by Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles), requires the Attorney General to draft guidelines for the conduct of police line-ups and photo arrays to increase the accuracy of eyewitness identifications.
- Senate Bill 609, sponsored by Senator Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles), requires corroboration of testimony by jailhouse informants.

Again, I strongly encourage you to sign SB 511, 756, and 609 into law.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph L. Spaeth  
Public Defender

cc: California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice via fax: (408) 554-5026