



Senator Gloria Romero,
 Chair of Senate Public Safety Committee
 Attn: Mary Kennedy, Committee Staff
 State Capitol, Room 2031
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 Via Fax: 916-445-0485

RE: Support for SB 511, 609 and 756

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair
 Pat Clark
New York

Vice Chair
 Janis Gay
California

Treasurer
 Georgi Fisher
Virginia

Secretary
 Jené O'Keefe-Trigg
New York

Director
 Cathy Ansheles
New Mexico

Director
 Lorry Post
New Jersey

Director
 Terry Kay Rockefeller
Massachusetts

Director
 David Whettstone
Washington, DC

Founder
 Marie Deans
Virginia

**Murder Victims' Families
 for Reconciliation, Inc.**
 2100 M St, Ste 170-296
 Washington, DC 20037
 877-896-4702
 www.MVFR.org

Dear Senator Romero:

On behalf of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation (MVFR) I am writing to express our support for SB 511 (requiring electronic recording of interrogations), SB 609 (requiring corroboration for jailhouse informants), and SB 756 (requiring new guidelines for eyewitness identification procedures).

MVFR is the oldest national organization of murder victim family members and families of the executed who oppose the death penalty.

DNA evidence has proven that innocent people are being convicted and sentenced to prison in far greater numbers than we ever imagined. Many of those who have been exonerated have been on death row, waiting to die for the crimes of another. Each time an innocent person is wrongfully convicted, the harm falls not only on that person but also on the community and the crime victims, as each wrongful conviction leaves the true perpetrator on the streets to hurt more people. Convicting the guilty while protecting the innocent is the most fundamental goal of our criminal justice system. Yet, all too often, we fall short.

The California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice was established by California State Senate Resolution No. 44 "to study and review the administration of criminal justice in California, determine the extent to which that process has failed in the past," examine safeguards and improvements, and recommend proposals to ensure that the administration of criminal justice in California is just, fair and accurate. Chaired by John Van de Kamp, the former Attorney General and former Los Angeles County District Attorney, this bipartisan commission is composed of a victims' rights advocate, prosecutors, law enforcement officers and defense attorneys.

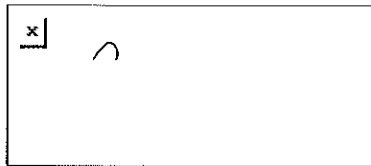
April 9, 2007

The Commission has conducted hearings, reviewed scientific evidence, consulted experts, and listened to personal testimonials. Based on this evidence, the Commission has issued a series of unanimous recommendations for reforms needed to prevent wrongful convictions in this state. These three bills will implement the most basic and most urgently needed reforms. Specifically,

- SB 511 will require electronic recording of custodial interrogations in violent felony cases. Research has shown that recording of interrogations is the best method to detect and prevent false confessions.
- SB 609 will require corroboration of testimony by jailhouse informants. We know that informants often lie to get out of jail. Thus, we should require some evidence to show they are telling the truth.
- SB 756 will require the Attorney General to issue guidelines for eyewitness identification procedures. Scientific research shows that there are better ways to conduct lineups than are now used.

MVFR strongly supports the legislative reforms recommended by the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice and urges timely passage of SB 511, 609, and 756.

Sincerely,



Pat Clark
Chair, MVFR Board of Directors

cc: Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas via fax: 916-951-4026
Senator Elaine Alquist via fax: 916-324-0283
California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice via fax: 408-554-5026
Francisco Lobaco, ACLU Legislative Office via fax 916-442-1743