

CITY OF LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA



A Certified City of Los Angeles Neighborhood Council

Neighborhood Council Contact Information

Mark Ridley-Thomas Constituent Service Center
8475 S. Vermont Ave
LOS ANGELES, CA 90044
TELEPHONE: (323) 789-1449

Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council

Board Members

Frank Prater

Chair

Ernie Mixon

Co-Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

Continued

Neighborhood Representatives Area 1

Johnnie McCray

Etta Johnson-Carter

Neighborhood Representatives Area 2

Aisha Kennedy

Cristal Bland

Neighborhood Representatives Area 3

Anthony Lamb

Lorna Ward

Members at Large

Aldreama Flowers

Algie Lee

July 18, 2007

Assembly Member Leno
Chair of Assembly Appropriations
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-319-2181

COPY

RE: Support for Senate Bill 756 (Ridley-Thomas)

Dear Assemblymember Leno:

On behalf of the Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council I am writing to express our support for SB 756 (Ridley-Thomas). This measure requires the Attorney General to convene interested parties in the criminal justice system to develop guidelines for the collection and handling of eyewitness identification evidence.

The Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council is a certified neighborhood council with the mission of impacting the quality of life for the stakeholders within its council boundaries.

These guidelines shall be developed to ensure reliable and accurate suspect identifications and shall be consistent with the reliable evidence supporting best practices, including consideration of the recommendations of the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice. On or before December 31, 2010, the Attorney General shall report to the Legislature, describing the *voluntary* implementation of the guidelines and the training implemented by California law enforcement agencies.

It is the intent of this legislation to improve the accuracy of eyewitness identifications, increase public trust in the criminal justice system, and implement best practices policies and procedures. 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.

This 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 recommendations for reforms needed to prevent wrongful convictions in the state of California.

The Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council strongly supports the legislative reforms recommended by the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice and urges timely passage of SB 756.

Sincerely,


Frank Prater
Chairman

COPY

cc:

Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas via fax: (916) 651-8899