

PRESS RELEASE

FROM: CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE FAIR  
ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

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CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE FAIR ADMINISTRATION OF  
JUSTICE TO HOLD FIRST PUBLIC HEARING IN SAN FRANCISCO  
ON MARCH 15, 2006.

The California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice, created by the California State Senate to examine the causes of wrongful convictions and make recommendations and proposals to further insure that the administration of criminal justice in California is just, fair and accurate, will hold its first public hearing in San Francisco on March 15, 2006 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Commission Chair John K. Van de Kamp announced that this hearing will focus on mistaken eyewitness identification as a cause of wrongful convictions, and proposals to make eyewitness identification more reliable. The Commission released a list of eleven tentative recommendations (attached) which will be the focus of testimony and discussion at the hearing. A keynote presentation will be made at the hearing by Professor Gary L. Wells, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Iowa State University, an internationally recognized expert on the reliability of eyewitness identification who co-chaired a panel that prepared guidelines for law enforcement for Eyewitness Evidence issued by the U.S. Department of Justice in 1999. Representatives of statewide organizations of judges, prosecutors, police and defense lawyers are being invited to address the Commission.

The composition of the Commission was recently expanded, and now includes Sheriff Lee Baca of Los Angeles County; Chief William Bratton of the Los Angeles Police Department, represented by Gerald Chaleff of Los Angeles; Attorney Kimiko Burton of San Francisco; Rabbi Allen Freehling

of Los Angeles; District Attorney Jim Fox of San Mateo County; Glen Craig, former Commissioner of the California Highway Patrol, of Sacramento; California Attorney General Bill Lockyer, represented by Deputy Attorney General Dane Gillette of San Francisco; California State Public Defender Michael Hersek of San Francisco; Professor Bill Hing of the University of California at Davis; Public Defender Michael P. Judge of Los Angeles; District Attorney George Kennedy of Santa Clara County; Michael Laurence, the Director of the California Habeas Corpus Resource Center in San Francisco; Attorney Alejandro Mayorkas of Los Angeles; Judge John Moulds of Sacramento; Cookie Ridolfi, the Director of the Northern California Innocence Project at Santa Clara University; Douglas Ring of San Francisco; Nina Salerno Ashford of Crime Victims United of California; District Attorney Greg Totten of Ventura County; and Attorney John Streeter of San Francisco. John Van de Kamp of Los Angeles, who previously served as California's Attorney General and as President of the California State Bar, was appointed to chair the Commission.

The Commission is expected to issue a final report in December of 2007, but contemplates the issuance of interim reports as well, addressing issues such as the problem of mistaken eyewitness identification.

The San Francisco hearing will be held at the Marriott Hotel, 55 Fourth Street, San Francisco.