

Statement of Supervisor Bill Postmus Regarding “Report of Investigation of Lease and Purchase by San Bernardino County of Maranatha Correctional Facility in the City of Adelanto”, by Attorney Leonard Gumpport

My first priority as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and as the Board’s representative from the First District is to do everything within my power to maximize public safety in the County and in my district. That was my prime motivation in working toward the County’s acquisition of the Maranatha Correctional Facility in Adelanto.

At the time we first considered acquiring a high desert jail as a temporary solution to our severe jail-overcrowding problem, the Sheriff had advised the Board that he was being forced to release hundreds of criminals due to lack of jail space. He advised us of the possible availability of two private prisons in Adelanto, and he advised us that securing one of them for the County’s use was clearly the quickest and most realistic way to significantly reduce the number of inmates being set free into our neighborhoods short of a long-term solution like constructing a new, state-of-the-art jail at a cost of several hundred million dollars.

At the Board’s direction, County staff accomplished a virtual miracle by securing the Maranatha facility in a very short amount of time while at every turn making sure that all County policies were adhered to, that responsible real estate practices were followed, and that the taxpayers were always protected.

The allegations involving Brett Granlund were questionable from the start in that they were clearly motivated by revenge being sought by a disgruntled former business partner who had recently suffered public consequences related to his own questionable behavior. Regardless, the County did not hesitate to have the accusations investigated by outside counsel to help the County determine whether the public had been harmed.

I have serious objections to the sensationalistic tone of Attorney Leonard Gumpport’s report regarding the Maranatha jail lease/purchase. I am also disappointed that his report’s focus was allowed to wander so significantly from its specific purpose, which was to determine whether Mr. Granlund or any other individual benefited inappropriately or illegally, monetarily or otherwise, from the transaction. The report’s focus was not intended to be Mr. Gumpport’s opinions about any other aspects of the jail acquisition. Still, if one looks past Gumpport’s hyperbole, loaded wording, and in some cases unsupported statements, I believe it is clear that the public was in no way harmed in the lease and eventual purchase of the Maranatha facility. Quite to the contrary, more than 700 criminals who would otherwise be roaming free are now behind bars. Meanwhile, the County has in its possession a quality facility that will serve us for decades to come, and for which we clearly paid a fair price. I am very proud of the County’s actions in relation to this purchase, and I commend and fully

support County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer and his staff for conducting this transaction in a completely ethical and responsible manner.

All of this is not to say that I wasn't concerned about some of Mr. Gumport's assertions relative to these matters. With regard to Mr. Granlund, we have learned since the completion of Mr. Gumport's report that Platinum Advisors, Granlund's employer under contract with the County, had indeed given prior notice to the County's Legislative Affairs Director of the firm's relationship with Maranatha Corrections, although some key County personnel were not aware of this relationship. Further, in my opinion, Mr. Granlund clearly did not involve nor attempt to involve himself in direct negotiations regarding the jail acquisition.

Any concerns I may have had relative to Mr. Granlund's involvement in this matter have been addressed by the actions the County has already taken. Per my direction, the County has counseled Platinum Advisors, who in turn counseled Mr. Granlund as to the County's concerns and the expectation that no future conduct that could be perceived to be inappropriate will occur. Platinum is now required to keep the CAO completely informed about its clientele and any potential conflicts. Some will question why the County has maintained a relationship with Platinum in the face of this controversy. In fact, Platinum's overall performance has been exemplary. Severing our relationship with the firm over an issue that has been resolved and that did not harm the taxpayers would have left the county underrepresented in Sacramento in terms of advocacy, which certainly could prove to be harmful to the taxpayers. Still, Platinum is currently on retainer under a six-month extension of its previous contract, and a new Request for Proposals is being prepared so that Platinum will once again be subject to a competitive selection process should it desire to continue representing the County of San Bernardino.