STANISLAUS COUNTY *Keeping the Peace Since 1854*

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
Adam Christianson, Sheriff-Coroner

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

May 9, 2011

The Honorable Ricardo Cordova, Presiding Judge
Stanislaus County Superior Court
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto CA 95353

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report 11-10C

Dear Judge Cordova:

I am in receipt of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury's completed report "The Stanislaus County Sheriff Case #11-10C."

Pursuant to Penal Code Sections 933(c) and 933.05 the following is my response.

Findings:

F1. The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury finds the Stanislaus County Sheriff violated Government Code section 3206.

Response: The respondent disagrees with the finding.

While I appreciate the time and effort of the Civil Grand Jury, I respectfully disagree with their conclusion that discussing public safety issues with those I command or with The Modesto Bee Editorial Board is a political event. Neither of the appearances mentioned were open to the public and both discussions were focused on budget, staffing, resource allocation, area command/decentralization, promotional/assignment decisions, crime rates, management decisions and other departmental/community related public safety issues.

F2. The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury finds no evidence to support the allegation that the Sheriff ignored the "cease and desist" letter from the Stanislaus Sworn Deputies' Association.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F3. The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury finds that the "Hatch Act" does not apply in this matter.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F4. The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury finds the Stanislaus County Sheriff did not violate California Labor Code section 1101.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F5. The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury finds the Stanislaus County Sheriff did not violate California Government Code section 3506.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Recommendations:

R1. It is the recommendation of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury that the Sheriff and successors refrain from wearing a uniform while participating in any political activity.

Response: The respondent agrees with the recommendation and intends to implement the recommendation.

The Office of the Sheriff is a constitutionally elected office and can only be held by a peace officer as defined by the California Penal Code and the Peace Officers Standards & Training. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer in the County and as such, the uniform is part of the job.

The duties and responsibilities of the Sheriff are very demanding and often times require a constant presence in the community. The Office of the Sheriff is a non-partisan elective office and one that frequently is involved in political issues or issues that have political significance. I did not perceive that discussing departmental/community related public safety issues with those I command or with The Modesto Bee Editorial Board, in a forum that was not open to the voters or the public at large, would be considered a "political activity."

I understand the Civil Grand Jury's concern that those events could be considered a political activity and in the future, I will make every effort to avoid the appearance of "participating in any political activity" while in uniform.

Sincerely,

ADAM CHRISTIANSON
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Supervisor Dick Monteith, Chairman, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors
Denis D. France, Foreperson, Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury
Richard W. Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, Stanislaus County