



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



July 23, 2020

Mr. Xavier Becerra
Attorney General
California Department of Justice
Office of the Attorney General
Post Office Box 944255
Sacramento, California 94244-2550

Dear Attorney General Becerra:

POSSIBLE CRIMINAL CONDUCT

Recent events have come to light involving possible criminal conduct of the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Officer, (CEO) Sachi Ann Hamai.

During a July 21, 2020, meeting of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, in which CEO Hamai attended and participated, it was revealed that she had an interest in some of the matters before the Board that she had not previously disclosed, (possible violation of California Government codes 1222, 87100, 87200-87213, and 21090).

Until July 21, 2020, CEO Hamai sat on the Board of Directors of United Way - Los Angeles, a social services, entity. United Way is a non-profit organization. It is unknown at this time, what, if any, compensation she received for this position.

During the meeting of the Board of Supervisors, a discussion and a vote was held regarding placing an amendment to the County Charter, that would reallocate 10% of all general revenue funds from law enforcement including the Sheriff, District Attorney, Probation, and Superior Courts.

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The Board directed the CEO as well as County Counsel to report back to them within a week regarding this proposal, as well as the placing of this measure on the ballot for the November general election.

Supervisor Barger related that United Way had conducted a survey of registered voters in Los Angeles County, and reported on the results of that poll. She then pointedly asked CEO Hamai if she was on the United Way Board of Directors, and when she learned of the poll, which clearly had an impact on the business of the county.

CEO Hamai was disingenuous in her answers regarding what she knew, and when she knew it. She did indicate that later that day she was resigning her Board of Directors position from United Way.

A brief preliminary investigation revealed that in fact, United Way had engaged the services of a public policy/consulting company identified as Evitarus, to conduct the poll.

CEO Hamai had engaged Evitarus to conduct a poll in 2016, in her duties as the County CEO. As a result of this 2016 poll, Proposition H, a half cent tax increase, was passed, providing funding for Los Angeles County's homeless population.

CEO Hamai denied knowing of the United Way poll in the July 21, 2020, Board of Supervisors meeting, and stated that it must have just "slipped" by her. She admitted that it gave the appearance of a conflict of interest, and related that was why she had resigned her position that day.

A preliminary investigation has been conducted and reported on by detectives from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. A copy of that report, with attachments, will accompany this request.

Due to the obvious conflict in having any Los Angeles law enforcement agency investigate these serious allegations, I am requesting that your office conduct the criminal inquiry.

This Department will gladly assist you in any endeavor you deem necessary to complete this task and please don't hesitate to ask. The elected Sheriff has recused himself from these types of investigations since he assumed office, and the final responsibility regarding investigative decisions in these sensitive cases rests with me.

Your assistance in this matter is most appreciated. Please feel free to contact Lieutenant Jesus Carrasco, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Office of the Undersheriff, 211 W. Temple Street, 8th floor, Los Angeles, California 90012, [REDACTED] with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI
UNDERSHERIFF