



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



August 27, 2020

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION WORKING GROUP

In February 2019, your Board unanimously passed a motion that called on social service providers, public interest law firms, community advocacy organizations, and Los Angeles County's (County) justice and health departments to establish a public-private Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Working Group to "draft a comprehensive plan to build a more effective justice system."

The Board directed me as the Sheriff of the County to provide representatives from my Department to participate in the ATI Working Group. As an elected official, I must balance the vision of the Board with my first priority, which is the public safety of all the residents and visitors in the County. Public safety should be the top priority for all of the County leaders involved in developing criminal justice reform.

Since the inception of the ATI Working Group, there have been several Board motions that have directed the Working Group to address serious criminal justice issues that will have lasting effects on the residents of our County. In each ATI Working Group structure, there is an important component that involves community engagement. I agree that community engagement is vital for the Working Group to gain valuable insight from the people most directly impacted by criminal justice reform and share this information with the County leaders, so they can make informed decisions for the communities they serve. Unfortunately, since the inception of the ATI concept, the community members involved in the different working committees have all been offender-centric advocates.

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It is vital that as leaders of County government, we allow community advocates for victims of crimes to have an equal voice with those who advocate for the victimizers. The people who have been affected most by crime must be part of every ATI Working Group community process. If the ATI Working Group refuses to acknowledge the victim's role in the criminal justice process and refuses to allow them a seat at the table when determining the County's criminal justice reform, then as the elected Sheriff of Los Angeles County, I am unable to allow my Department to be involved in any further ATI Working Groups.

I was elected to represent every person in the County. By excluding the concerns from victims of crime, we as government leaders are ignoring an important group from the communities we serve and merely pushing a one-sided political agenda, which ignores the rights of all residents to live free from fear and harm.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact me at

Sincerely,



ALEX VILLANUEVA
SHERIFF

AV:BC:aa

(Office of Assistant Sheriff Chase)

- c: Peter Espinoza, Director, Office of Diversion & Re-entry, Department of Health Services
- Christina R. Ghaly, Director, Department of Health Services
- Jonathan E. Sherin, Director, Mental Health Department
- Mary C. Wickham, County Counsel, Office of the County Counsel