County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
http://cao.co.la.ca.us

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

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Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

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Fifth District

November 21, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Second District
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Third District
Supervisor Don Knabe, Fourth District
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

STATUS REPORT ON TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS CONSERVATOR MISMANANGEMENT AND ABUSE (ITEM NO. 19, AGENDA OF NOVEMBER 22, 2005)

On November 15, 2005, on motion of Supervisor Burke, your Board directed my Office to create a Task Force consisting of the Departments of Community and Senior Services, Consumer Affairs, County Counsel, Public Guardian (Department of Mental Health), and other interested County department heads, to immediately review the case scenarios reported in a series of recent Los Angeles Times articles regarding conservator abuse. Your Board also directed the Task Force to assess the County's ability to investigate complaints from the public about conservator abuse, promote legislation relative to the oversight and monitoring of conservators, and request the participation of the District Attorney's Elder Abuse Section in this effort.

On November 17, 2005, we convened a Task Force consisting of representatives from the referenced departments, as well as representatives from the Sheriff's Department, Department of Public Social Services, and the Superior Court (Probate Department).

At the meeting, there was discussion that some of the incidents reported in the Los Angeles Times articles occurred in the past and took place mainly outside of the County of Los Angeles. Representatives from the Superior Court also noted that the articles did not report actions the Court has taken during the last several months to improve the Court's ability to oversee the work of conservators. However, the Task Force clearly acknowledged the problems associated with this under-regulated profession and the difficulties faced by those who seek to complain or redress abuses. Accordingly, the Task Force will pursue the following actions:

- Document and detail the current avenues and procedures available in the County for pursuing complaints against conservator abuses, including recent enhancements, and identify areas where they can be further strengthened;

- Recommend additional outreach and education to seniors and families about conservator mismanagement and abuse and recourses available to address this type of abuse by increasing the number of financial abuse and prevention sessions, including the subject of conservator mismanagement and abuse, conducted throughout the County of Los Angeles.

- Examine programs created by other counties to address the needs of elder adults who require guardian support services;

- Identify both short- and long-term goals that will address conservator mismanagement abuse through audit, investigation, and oversight; and

- Examine possible legislation addressing possible licensing, oversight, and regulation of conservators, and determine if it adequately addresses the problem or if the County should pursue alternative legislation.

Due to the complexity of this effort, we will report back to your Board in 45 days with our findings and recommendations. A related motion from Supervisor Antonovich is proposed as Item 20-C on the November 22, 2005 Board Agenda. Should your Board approve this motion, the Task Force will incorporate this effort with the Order of November 15, 2005.

If you have any questions, please let me know, or your staff may contact Angie Gentry of this Office at (213) 974-1197.

DEJ:MKZ
AG:os

c: District Attorney
Sheriff
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Director of Consumer Affairs
Director of Mental Health
Director of Public Social Services
Interim Director of Community and Senior Services
Superior Court