BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
383 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

GLORIA MOLINA
YVONNE B. BURKE
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
DON KNABE
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

SACHI A. HAMAI, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 974-1411

June 7, 2006

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

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ALLOCATION OF REWARD FUNDS
IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF ISHMAIL DURDEN
(ALL DISTRICTS)
(3-VOTE)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

Approve the recommendation of the Reward Committee to distribute reward funds in total amount of $5,000, to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds, to the individual who provided information to law enforcement that led to the arrest and conviction of Jose Valdez, the person responsible for the death of 8-year-old Ishmail Durden on Saturday, February 8, 2003.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Executive Office of the Board received a claim for the $5,000 reward offered by your Board on behalf of an informant who wishes to remain anonymous. In accordance with provisions of the County Code, your Board must now consider the claim and make a final determination for distribution of the reward funds. The reward was first offered on February 11, 2003, on motion of Supervisor Burke and reestablished on May 13, 2003, to aid in the continuing investigation.

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code that established procedures for offering cash rewards for information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of persons guilty of criminal acts. Your Board, from time to time has offered such rewards to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement with their investigations.

A panel made up of individuals representing the Sheriff, the Chief Administrative Officer, the County Counsel and the Executive Officer of the Board reviewed the claim filed for the reward funds. The panel has recommended that $5,000 be awarded to the informant based on the following information presented to the Reward Committee:

- On Saturday, February 8, 2003, at approximately 12:30 a.m., several unknown suspects shot into a home near 60th Street and Menlo Avenue in the City of Los Angeles. Ishmail Durden was killed while he was sleeping. Several other family members, including other children, were wounded during the incident.

- Immediately after the shooting an individual came forward and provided investigators from the Los Angeles Police Department information relating to the case.

- The individual who came forward maintained regular contact with investigators providing them with crucial information that resulted in the identity and address of one of the suspects. Armed with this crucial information, the Los Angeles Police Department was able to obtain a felony arrest warrant on July 10, 2003.

- On July 16, 2003, the warrant was served on one of the two suspects whose name is being withheld due to the fact that he is a juvenile. The other suspect Karl Ellis Smith, was ordered out of State prison where he was in custody on unrelated charges.

- The District Attorney's office filed the following charges against both suspects:
  - one count of murder;
  - three counts of attempted murder; and
  - one count of shooting at an inhabited dwelling.

- On March 8, 2006, the juvenile suspect pled guilty to the following charges and was sentenced to 21 years in State prison.
  - one count of voluntary manslaughter; and
  - one count of attempted murder

- The other suspect Karl Ellis Smith who was already in State prison where he was in custody on unrelated charges, was acquitted of the crime relating to the death of Ishmail Durden.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the above recommendation supports the County Strategic Goal of Service Excellence. Publication in local newspapers and posting of reward notices on the County website may encourage persons to provide information to law enforcement which could lead to the arrest and conviction of the individuals who commit crimes, thereby improving the quality of life to residents of Los Angeles County by removing such individuals from the community.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Board of Supervisors established a $5,000 reward fund. Pursuant to provisions in the County Code, the reward is to be paid from the Board of Supervisors' discretionary funds in equal shares of $1,000 from each member's account.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

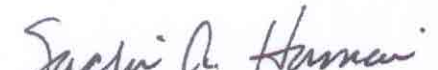
The action recommended is in compliance with the County Code, Title 4 - Revenue and Finance relating to rewards; and specifically Section 4.50.010B which states, "conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crime shall be required for payment of a reward unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of such person or persons."

The attached notice was posted on the Board of Supervisors' web site and published in the Los Angeles Daily Commerce, the Los Angeles Herald Dispatch and the Southwest Wave. In addition, copies were provided to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the 77th Street Station of the Los Angeles Police Department. The original filing period to submit a claim to the Executive Office for the reward money expired on July 11, 2003.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There is no impact on current County services.

Respectfully submitted,



SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Attachment

R:\Reward Letters\Reward letter regarding Ishmail Durden.doc

c: District Attorney
Sheriff
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller

NOTICE OF $5,000.00 REWARD
OFFERED BY THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles extended the $5,000 reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the death of 8-year-old Ishmail Durden who was shot while in his home near 60th Street and Menlo Avenue, on Saturday, February 8, 2003 at approximately 12:30 a.m.

Any person having any information related to this crime is requested to call Detective Ernie Jones or Detective Greg Stearns at the Los Angeles Police Department, 77th Station at (213) 485-1383 and refer to Report No. 03-1207-533.

The terms of the reward provide that:

-- The information given that leads to the determination of the identity, the apprehension and conviction of any person or persons must be given no later than August 11, 2003. All reward claims must be in writing and shall be received no later than October 10, 2003.

-- The total County payment of any and all rewards shall in no event exceed $5,000 and no claim shall be paid prior to conviction unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of the person or persons responsible for the crime or crimes.

-- The County reward may be apportioned between various persons and/or paid for the conviction of various persons as the circumstances fairly dictate.

Any claims for the reward funds should be filed no later than October 10, 2003 with the Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors, 500 West Temple Street, Room 383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles, California 90012, Attention: Ishmail Durden Reward Fund. For further information, please call (213) 974-1747.

Si no entiende esta noticia o si necesita mas informacion, favor de llamar a este numero (213) 974-1747.

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES