



April 11, 2003

The Honorable Joe Dunn, Member
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 254 – SUPPORT AS AMENDED

Dear Senator Dunn:

The Riverside Sheriffs' Association, which represents over 2,000 rank and file Deputy Sheriffs, Deputy Probation Officers, District Attorney Investigators and Deputy Coroners – the entire law enforcement team in the County of Riverside - is pleased to support SB 254, as amended.

As you know, sheriffs are the principal providers of court security services in California. Last year you authored SB 1396, which created a statewide structure for identifying reportable court security costs and to simplify the process both for sheriffs/counties and for the state and Judicial Counsel. As part of our discussions on SB 1396, we became aware that court attendants – essentially civilian attendants who staff many judges on non-security matters – are being used in ways that stand to jeopardize the safety and security of those who use courtrooms and threaten the judges themselves.

SB 254 seeks to define, clarify and limit the role of court attendants in California's courtrooms. In some counties, court attendants are being used in superior court rooms – court rooms that hear criminal matters with the attendants having security related functions. *This appears to be in conflict with the spirit and the letter of existing law that requires the sheriff to attend all superior court criminal proceedings and the code that describes the role of court attendants.* In some cases, the attendants staff the courtroom and the deputy sheriff acts as an escort, bringing inmates in and out of the room. In other criminal courts, the attendants summon a deputy sheriff when the judge remands a person to custody.

ALADS will continue to work with you, the Judiciary and other interested parties in ensuring that California's courtrooms continue to receive the highest levels of court security.

Very truly yours,



Pat McNamara
President



Timothy H. B. Yaryan
Legislative Counsel and Advocate

cc: RSA