

**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ON THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY CITIZEN'S
ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION**

December 2002

**CITIZENS'
ECONOMY
EFFICIENCY
COMMISSION**
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
1964-2002

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December 5, 2002

Chair of the Board Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
Room 866
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairperson Burke:

Over the past three years the Economy and Efficiency Commission has been involved in numerous areas of activity intended to improve county operations, expand upon the effectiveness of the Commission and support the County's Strategic Plan. Specifically, in addition to projects designed to advance the efficiency and effectiveness of County management and operations, the Commission has been active in areas of community outreach, operational efficiency, organizational representation and the management of Commission's strategic direction. The attached report provides detail on the scope of activities in each of these areas.

The Commission would like to reassure you of our continuing commitment to the mission of improving the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of local government. Be assured that we are focusing our efforts to that end.

Respectfully,



Robert Philibosian
Chairman

CC: Each Supervisor
Each Commissioner



**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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OF THE
ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION**

In recognition of the responsibility entrusted to the Economy and Efficiency Commission, we present this report to the Board on some of the Commission's most important activities and accomplishments over the past three years.

It has been our intention over this period to bring together the diverse skills, interests and talents, which are exceptionally well represented in the members of this Commission, to assist Los Angeles County in achieving its objective of greater efficiency and effectiveness. We believe that together we have been able to achieve our goal of improving the management and operations of the County. Our work has strengthened the commitment of every member of this Commission to the principle that recognizes a citizen's ability to contribute in a significant manner to the improvement of local government.

In this assessment we would like to focus on the totality of the duties that we have undertaken as commissioners to insure that we are fulfilling our responsibilities to the County, its departments and the citizens of our community.

Commission Projects

Over the past three years the Commission has completed a number of projects. Included among these are reports that have presented recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. A listing of the Commission's major endeavors over this period follows:

1. A Review of Emancipation Services

This review was initiated by the Commission to consider difficulties in the delivery of emancipation services to the eligible young adults within Los Angeles County. In evaluating these problems recommendations focused primarily upon operations, technology utilization and the availability of housing to this population. This report was prepared with the objective of contributing to the ongoing efforts of the program's participants to develop effective and efficient service delivery.

2. Review of the Effectiveness of the Los Angeles County Grand Jury

Primarily in an attempt to respond to concerns raised regarding the diversity of the grand jury, the Los Angeles County Superior Court bifurcated the 2000-2001 Grand Jury into its criminal and civil functions. As a result of this bifurcation several problems arose that required increased attention by both the court and the grand jury. These problems included facilities management, training, morale, ability to indict, costs and recruitment. To assist the court in their efforts and in response several specific concerns, the Economy

and Efficiency Commission undertook a review of the grand jury to consider these difficulties in the context of the operations and effectiveness of the separate functions into which it has been divided.

3. *Review of the Actions in Response to the "Accountability and Municipal Service Delivery to Unincorporated Areas" Report*

This review was initiated in the context of other actions that have been taken in response to issues raised in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. It was also intended to provide the county with a follow-up review of the Commission's 1996 report covering the delivery of municipal services to unincorporated areas. This review concluded that many of the actions taken by the county have been commendable and makes several additional recommendations to assist in these efforts.

4. *Sunset Review - July 2001*

To respond to the Board's desire to periodically review the ongoing effectiveness of County commissions, the Economy and Efficiency Commission prepared and submitted an evaluation of its activities and achievements over the previous five years. After a review of this evaluation by the Auditor-Controller and the Audit Committee, the Board extended the Commission's sunset date another five years.

5. *Synopsis of Reports, 1964-2002*

This report updates, catalogs, and summarizes Economy and Efficiency Commission publications since its creation by the Board of Supervisors in 1964. It lists the reports, studies, letters and position papers of the Commission. This synopsis chronologically summarizes these publications both by title and within functional categories.

6. *Monitoring Current Audit Recommendations*

In an effort to maximize the utilization of the recommendations made as a result of the audits conducted within the County, the Commission recommended the development and implementation of a browser based system to identify, track and coordinate all audit recommendations made within the County. Using such a system will not only facilitate monitoring and accountability, but it will also enable other departments and/or county organizations to review any recommendations by functional area to insure that these valuable resources are available countywide.

Commission Representation

The Commission has also supported, participated in, and provided representation to several other County bodies:

1. *Ad Hoc Hearing Body on Health Care Governance (Chair)*

In 2002, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established an Ad Hoc Hearing Body on Health Department Governance, designating the Chairman of the Economy and Efficiency Commission its Chairman. The Ad Hoc Hearing Body, comprised of representatives from organizations dealing with Los Angeles County's health issues, heard testimony and conducted research regarding various governance models. During its deliberations it discussed six potential models for the Department of Health Services (DHS), including a Health Authority (a separate, semi-autonomous authority), a commission that would run DHS, a Hospital District, and a Health Department separated into Public Health and Personal Health. The objective of the Ad Hoc Hearing Body was to assemble and analyze information and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the governance model for DHS

2. *Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee - Proposition E Special Tax (Ad Hoc Member)*

In accordance with Proposition E, the Board of Supervisors established the Independent Citizen's Oversight to review expenditures paid from the special tax to ensure that such expenditures are for "Fire Protection or Paramedic Rescue Services". These expenditures specifically include emergency paramedic rescue, fire fighting, search and rescue, and hazardous materials and disaster response. The Chairman of the Economy and Efficiency Commission is a member of the Oversight Committee. The committee periodically reviews and recommends actions concerning the expenditure of these funds to the Board of Supervisors.

3. *Quality and Productivity Commission (Liaison Member)*

To assist in the coordination of mutually beneficial activities, the Economy and Efficiency Commission and the Quality and Productivity Commission exchange liaison commissioners. On numerous occasions both commissions have assisted each other in fulfilling their mission responsibilities.

4. *Local Government Services Commission (Liaison Member)*

To assist in the coordination of mutually beneficial activities, the Economy and Efficiency Commission and the Local Government Services Commission exchange liaison commissioners. On numerous occasions both commissions have assisted each other in fulfilling their mission responsibilities.

Commission Outreach

The Commission recognizes its responsibility to inform the public and county organizations of its mission, functions, and activities. In addition to the normal means of informing the public of its activities, the Commission has developed and implemented the following:

1. Web Site Management

Since 1995 and in accordance with County open government policy, the Commission maintains a web site to provide information on the activities and accomplishments of the Commission. Over the past three years efforts have focused upon the following projects:

- ◆ In accordance with the policy directive of the Board of Supervisors all of the Commission's reports have been made available to the public through its web site. During this period all of the 141 reports that have been published by the Commission were coded in HTML and placed on the site. The current HTML coding is being converted to PDF files to facilitate the public's access to the graphics that are contained within the publications.
- ◆ Further efforts in the management of our web site include an ongoing project to redesign the site to make it more user friendly, compatible with current web site design criteria, and improved navigation and information access.

2. Commission Brochure

To facilitate our outreach efforts a brochure was designed and published in-house. This brochure has been used extensively, most recently to inform the incoming Grand Jury of the mission and function of the Commission and the manner in which we can be of assistance in helping them accomplish some of the tasks that they may chose to undertake.

Commission Management

To provide information and guidance to commissioners to enable them to perform their functions more effectively the Commission has achieved the following:

1. Commissioner's Handbook

To assist commissioners in their understanding of the operations of both the County and the Commission, an Economy and Efficiency Commissioner Handbook has been developed. This handbook, which is given to each new commissioner, outlines for him/her the background information that is critical in assuming a commissioner's duties, the bylaws of the Commission, the organization and structure of the Commission, and the resources that are available to assist in fulfilling his/her duties.

2. Revised Commission Bylaws

It was necessary during this period for the Commission to review and revise the rules and authorities under which it operated and conducted its business. The revision resulted in an improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission's meetings and operations.

3. Commission Management

The organization and management of its operations determines the degree to which the Commission can accomplish the goals it sets for itself and the extent to which it can contribute in a meaningful manner to their achievement and the achievement of the County's goals. As a result of this realization, serious attention is placed on Commission operations and information management. To improve upon the Commission's procedures and infrastructure recent efforts have been focused upon:

- ◆ **Maintenance of office computer systems** that are consistent with the systems provided to the staff of the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors. As a result the Commission office maintains a technologically current system that is compatible with the technological standards and requirements established by the County and that is sufficiently powerful to support the systems requirements of the Commission, e.g. lengthy report production.

- ◆ **Continually revised and updated administrative systems** that are documented in an online Economy and Efficiency Commission Office Manual. This manual, which provides a baseline of information as to the procedures and processes of the office, is continually being updated. This form of documentation has several advantages in the conduct of Commission operations:

- ◆ It facilitates the evaluation of internal operations to determine the most efficient internal procedures possible.

- ◆ It serves as an office-training document for Commission personnel

- ◆ It provides an information base for future revision and/or automation of office procedures.

- ◆ As a hands on guide, it provides a "how to" manual that is on-line with direct links to appropriate organizations, publications and documents.

- ◆ **A revised filing structure** that enables the user to easily find the Commission's publications and the supporting background material that was used in the project development process.

- ◆ **Automation of the filing system** is an extension of the filing system structural revision. The Commission is currently in the process of transferring all of its

hard copy files to CD. The transfer of these files will both free up physical space and provide a more efficient system with which to access information. The development of this system will be extensive, initially requiring the design and implementation of an indexing methodology that will facilitate the access and use of the stored data.

Commission Future Task Force Direction

The Economy and Efficiency Commission continually reviews county operations and attempts to define those areas that have potential for fiscal savings or producing operational efficiencies. When such an area is identified the Commission assigns it to an existing or newly formed task force. Often when a project is completed the task force is dissolved unless it is determined that the task force should remain to monitor its recommendations. Attachment 1 to this report is a copy of the Commission's organization chart to assist the reader in understanding its structure.

Currently, the following task forces have been created by the Commission to undertake a review of the indicated areas of interest for possible project submissions:

Economic Development – Current efforts involve assisting the Chief Administrative Office in preparing for two economic summits, one for internal county participants and the other involving expanding the participation to include the private sector. Additional areas are currently being considered as opportunities for the Commission to meaningfully contribute to the expansion of economic development within the county.

Organization and Accountability – A review of areas within the Workers Compensation issue is currently underway to determine the best means of positively impacting the process. The current focus is leading the task force toward an evaluation of systemic fraud and how it may be reduced.

Emancipation Services – This task force has completed its report on Emancipation Services and has submitted it to the Board for consideration. As of the present, the task force is following the progress of the Chief Administrative Officer's Emancipation Interim Team and the Department of Children and Family Services.

Grand Jury – In fulfilling its responsibilities to follow-up on grand jury recommendations the task force recognized that no centralized system existed to follow-up on audit recommendations. As a result of this recognition the task force prepared the above noted report entitled "Monitoring Current Audit Recommendations" that the Commission submitted to the Board in November 2002. The task force has also prepared a letter for the Commission's submission to the Board that recommended the creation of a Master County Events Calendar. The utilization of such a calendar would appreciably improve the communications on and the coordination of events within the county.

Sheriff's Department Court Transportation Services (Created November 2002) – A review is being initiated to consider potential changes in operations and/or procedures to

enable the Sheriff's Department and/or the Courts to implement efficiencies in its prisoner transportation function.

Conclusion

In closing, the Commission feels particularly fortunate to have earned the support of the Board of Supervisors and county departments and would like to express our thanks and appreciation. It is our intent to continue to improve our expertise and capability to contribute in a meaningful manner to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the management and operations of the County. It is the desire of the Commission to increase its efforts to insure full accessibility to the citizens of Los Angeles County.

TASK FORCE ORGANIZATION & COMMISSONER ASSIGNMENTS

