

**REMARKS OF COMMISSIONER LOURDES G. BAIRD, CHAIR
HEARING OF CITIZENS' COMMISSION ON JAIL VIOLENCE
SEPTEMBER 28, 2012**

When we first were formed, prior to the time that we were actually appointed, the Board of Supervisors presented their decision to form this Commission and gave us the following mandate: "to conduct a review of the nature, depth and cause of the problem of inappropriate deputy use of force in the jails and to recommend corrective action as necessary. It shall be the task of the Commission to restore public confidence in the constitutional operation of our jails."

Now I'd like to take just a moment to thank not only those volunteers, which you six [Deputy General Counsel] represent, but so many other volunteers, our staff, our General Counsel, and our Executive Director and furthermore the six [other] members of this Commission. Until such time as all of us were in place, we really couldn't get started.

The group has indeed done an incredible job, and I'm not going to go through all of the work because it is quite obvious by reading this Report how much work and time has gone into it. I do want to thank, as I mentioned, the volunteers. I also would like to thank the witnesses. Those are witnesses who came willingly -- because we have no subpoena power nor contempt power -- they came of their own accord and they testified on their behalf and on our behalf. Not only those witnesses but there are many members of the public -- former inmates and family members of inmates who have had incidents in the jails and I do commend them as well because that takes a great deal of courage to come out and make those comments. So without that we never would have been able to proceed.

This Report really is the very first comprehensive investigation of our Los Angeles County jail system, from top to bottom, with a focus on the problem of inappropriate deputy excessive force. Our findings and recommendations are a reflection of the thorough investigation and the presentations of the staff.

It is our hope, and I'm sure that all the Commissioners join me, that the Sheriff, as well as the Board of Supervisors, will embrace these recommendations and findings in order to fulfill our last mandate, which is perhaps the most important one, and that is to "restore public confidence in the constitutional operation of our jails." And now it is truly up to them to do so.

Thank you very much