

# NEWS

From Supervisor Gary Ovitt  
Fourth District, San Bernardino County

PRESS RELEASE

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## Ovitt Responds to Hueston Editorial

The Sun and Daily Bulletin's May 17 editorial was a curious study in revisionist history in that it went out of its way to create the false impression that the county had nothing to do with bringing about the Hueston report on the investigation into former Assessor Bill Postmus and various improper activities that took place under his watch. The editorial bordered on outright dishonesty by making it seem the report was entirely the product of some outside force that caught the county red-handed in scandal.

The fact of the matter, as most everyone knows, is that Attorney John C. Hueston was retained by the Board of Supervisors after the county – no one else – discovered that Postmus and his top lieutenants were improperly using county resources for political purposes. The District Attorney's investigation touted by the Sun and Daily Bulletin would not exist had the county not brought evidence of Postmus' activities to the District Attorney's attention early in Postmus' tenure as Assessor.

The newspapers may see the report as "another black eye" for the county. Although the information in the report is truly embarrassing for anyone in public service, we don't see it as a "black eye" as much as it is further proof that the County of San Bernardino will not tolerate abuse and corruption. The county has established a consistent track record of publicly rooting out unethical behavior and punishing those responsible, even it leads to uncomfortable revelations.

It's too bad the Sun and the Daily Bulletin can't see past its desire to appear vigilant by making the county look bad, when the truth is the objectionable behavior was occurring right under the newspapers' watchful eye, yet it was the county that took action. The Sun and the Bulletin waited for the county to do something, reported on what occurred, and is now taking credit for uncovering something that was in fact exposed and dealt with by the county – while at the same time trying to create the appearance that the county did nothing.

It has been publicly established that shortly after Postmus became Assessor, the county became aware of political activity occurring within his office. County staff reported to County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer that they were receiving political emails generated by Assessor staff during regular business hours. Mr. Uffer admonished the Assessor and began keeping records of the office's activities. Soon thereafter, Supervisor Paul Biane, who at the time

was Chairman of the Board, presented the information to the District's Attorney's Office, prompting the current investigation. This occurred long before the grand jury began looking into the Assessor's office.

These points aren't raised as an attempt to minimize the good work being done by the District Attorney and the efforts of the grand jury. It's a matter of giving credit where credit is due, especially when a newspaper is using its access to a large audience to try to not only take that credit away, but fool the public into believing that their county government was somehow complicit.

We are not proud that yet another group of former county officials have been implicated in a corruption scandal. We realize all too well that such a revelation raises questions about the entire county, including the good and honest county employees and officials whose only interest is in serving their community. But it's also important for the public to know their county has once again been diligent in rooting out corruption on its own, and is following through on holding the offenders accountable for their behavior.