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December 20, 2013

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
California State Assembly
State Capitol Building, Room 3146
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: AB 1040 (Wieckowski) – Peace Officers
As Introduced 2/22/13 – **OPPOSE**

Dear Assemblyman Wieckowski:

The County of San Bernardino regrettably must oppose AB 1040, which would eliminate local discretion in determining the circumstances in which probation officers should be armed. This bill would require counties to train and arm probation officers based on one individual within their caseload who was deemed to be high-risk. Under this provision, essentially every probation officer in the state would be armed.

Under current law, probation officers' employing agencies can authorize them to carry firearms. Decisions regarding the use of firearms are best made locally based on the needs of each respective community. In California, the majority of county probation departments arm some of their officers, but that process is carried out in a prudent and judicious manner and takes into account the officer as well as the officer's full caseload. As the caseload and circumstances change, it is critical for the team on the ground to have the flexibility to reassess assignments and make appropriate adjustments as needed.

The County of San Bernardino supports a well-equipped and well-trained probation staff but opposes a legislative mandate that removes the ability for a county to make critical public safety decisions, such as the use of firearms by local probations officers.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Legislative and Governmental Affairs, at 909-387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcountry.gov.

Sincerely,

JANICE RUTHERFORD
Board of Supervisors Chair
Second District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino