

# NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 1, 2009

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## Supervisors move to protect public resources from abuse

Keeping a promise made to the Grand Jury and the public, the Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved an ordinance clearly prohibiting public officials from using county resources, including the influence of their positions, for personal gain.

Various state laws and county ordinances and policies address this issue. However, in its final report released in July, the 2008-2009 San Bernardino County Grand Jury recommended that the Board of Supervisors amend the County Code of Ethics to prohibit public officials from using their public offices or positions for personal gain.

The Board took that recommendation one step further today, cementing that clause not only in the Code of Ethics but giving it the force of an ordinance. This gives the Board the legal basis it would need to take action against violators.

"The Board of Supervisors once again has made it clear that it won't tolerate any abuse of power or misuse of the public's resources," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Gary Ovitt.

The ordinance approved today will become part of a larger ordinance passed by the Board in 2002 to clarify the instances in which the Board could exercise its authority under the County Charter to remove an elected official from office.

During the past 10 years the Board of Supervisors has established a solid track record of instituting policies, ordinances, and other reforms – as well as taking action – to prevent corruption and other unethical practices, detect it quickly if it does occur, and provide the tools necessary to deal with offenders and recover what is owed to the public.

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Over the years, controls have been tightened and oversight has been increased, those who have violated the public's trust have been sued and prosecuted, and as a result the county has recovered tens of millions of dollars in court judgments and settlements.

"Nothing is more important to this Board of Supervisors than taking steps, such as the ordinance we passed today, to assure the public that we are committed to honest and open government," Chairman Ovitt said.