



City of Newark

Police Department

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Ray Samuels
Police Chief

April 24, 2007

Senator Gloria Romero
State Capitol, Room 13
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1019 Support

Dear Senator Romero:

I am writing to offer my support of SB 1019. This legislation would overturn the California Supreme Court decision in *Copley Press v. Superior Court*.

I have been employed as a police officer in the state of California since 1975 and have served as the police chief for the city of Newark since 2003. The development and maintenance of the public's trust is essential to the effective operations of a law enforcement agency. The transparency allowed under this legislation in the adjudication of administrative complaints against police officers is fundamental to that effort.

California Penal Code Sections 832.7 and 832.8 were originally enacted to make police personnel records confidential and severely restrict access to them by criminal defendants and their attorneys. This was done, in part, to shield police officers from unwarranted intrusions into their personnel files and the disclosure of findings in administrative complaints. Today, these Penal Code sections are questionably effective in that regard as motions to access police officer records are increasing in breadth and frequency. Interestingly, SB 1019 would likely reverse that trend by reducing secrecy and promoting transparency without risk to the involved police officer(s).

Some have voiced opposition to SB 1019 by suggesting that it would create recruitment and retention problems within California law enforcement. I reject this assertion, as it has been my experience that prospective police officers and currently employed police officers do not make employment decisions based upon the manner in which personnel complaints are investigated and adjudicated.

Public mistrust of the police and poor police-community relations only serve to make the delivery of police services more difficult and less effective.

Sincerely,

Ray Samuels
Police Chief