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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### GRAND JURY REPORTS HAVE POSITIVE IMPACTS THROUGHOUT VENTURA COUNTY

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors and other involved officials and agencies have now submitted required written responses to reports by the 2013-2014 Ventura County Grand Jury. These responses are posted with the corresponding report on the grand jury's website,

<http://www.ventura.org/grand-jury>; click on "Annual Reports" and consult "Fiscal Year 2013-2014."

"Overall, we're very pleased with the responses," says Grand Jury Foreman Robert Stewart, "which include implementing a majority of our recommendations. This should have a major positive impact on key areas of local government."

Each report is the result of a thorough investigation—usually sparked by a public complaint—into a city's or the county's government policies, procedures and/or practices. Each report includes methodology, determinations of facts, major findings and recommendations for improvement.

Grand jury reports turn a public spotlight on troublesome issues and act as catalysts for improvements. Elected public officials and boards that are subjects of a grand jury report are legally required to respond in writing to specified aspects of the report within 60 and 90 days respectively. When complete, all responses are sent to the state's archives in Sacramento.

The investigative report titles and number of adopted recommendations are:

1. **"Ventura County Campgrounds Park Host Program"** (released March 24): All six recommendations have been implemented.

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2. **“City of Ventura Water Rates”** (released March 26): All five recommendations have been implemented.
3. **“Ventura County Campaign Finance Ordinance”** (released April 8): As a board, the supervisors rejected two recommendations and voted one for further analysis. Individual supervisors’ and officials’ responses vary widely; consult website for details.
4. **“Temporary Food Facilities in Ventura County”** (released April 18): two of three recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors have been implemented; one is being analyzed further. The Environmental Health Division of the county’s General Services Agency has implemented six of the recommendations directed toward its operations, committed to two, held one for further analysis and declined to implement three.
5. **“Public Charter Schools Processes”** (released April 21): Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Stanley C. Mantooth responded that his office has implemented one recommendation and committed to the remaining three. Of six different school districts required to respond, all recommendations have been either implemented or committed to with the exception of one recommendation in the Moorpark school district.
6. **“City of Ventura Claims Process”** (released April 30): Of four recommendations, one has been implemented and three committed to.
7. **“City of Ventura Crosswalks Alert”** (released April 30): Of six recommendations, one has been implemented, two committed to, one submitted for further analysis and two will not be implemented.
8. **“Firefighting Air Assets: The Camarillo Springs Fire”** (released May 14): The Ventura County Sheriff’s Department is coordinating with the county Fire Protection District on four out of five of its recommendations and following through on the fifth as well. The Board of Supervisors has said that all six recommendations made to them require further analysis.
9. **“Healthcare Records Processes and Procedures”** (released May 29): Of four recommendations, the board of supervisors, Ventura County Health Care Agency, and county CEO’s office maintained that all are already standard procedures.
10. **“City of Ventura Hillside Area Grading Permits”** (Released June 9): Of eight recommendations, three have been implemented, one committed to, one submitted for further analysis and three will not be implemented.
11. **“Moorpark Zoning Compliance, Tracking and Reporting”** (released June 9): Of eight recommendations, one has been implemented and seven committed to.

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Another report—"Detention Facilities Inspections"—documents yearly visits by grand jurors to all 15 facilities in Ventura County where persons may be held in custody. These visits are mandated by the State of California Penal Code and are not the result of an investigation sparked by a public complaint. The sheriff's department agreed with all the report's findings and recommendations.

The grand jury is a civil investigatory panel of 19 citizens created to serve as a voice of the people and a conscience of the community. Jurors are not appointed by politicians; they are volunteers who act as independent eyes and ears of Ventura County residents.

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