

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** February 28, 2000

**FROM:** CYNTHIA KURTZ, CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION 15, THE CRIME LABORATORIES  
CONSTRUCTION BOND ACT OF 1999

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution supporting the passage of the Crime Laboratories Construction Bond Act of 1999, more commonly known as Proposition 15 which will appear on the March 7, 2000, ballot in California which, if approved, will generate \$220 million for the construction of local crime laboratories throughout the state;
2. Authorize the City's position to be communicated to the community; and,
3. Authorize the Mayor to send letters to the appropriate authorities.

**BACKGROUND:**

Proposition 15 creates the Hertzberg-Polanco Crime Laboratories Construction Bond Act of 1999. This Act authorizes the issuance and sale of \$220 million of general obligation bonds to pay for the building of new local forensic laboratories and to upgrade and repair existing crime laboratories.

The bill would create the Forensic Laboratories Capital Expenditure Fund in the State Treasury. The bill would also create the Forensic Laboratories Authority within the Department of Justice, which would be comprised of 7 members, including the Attorney General, the State Director of Crime Laboratories, 5 members who would be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The bill would prescribe the powers and duties of the authority, and provide for repeal of the provisions establishing the authority on January 1, 2010. The bill would establish procedures for applications for funding the construction and renovation of local forensic laboratories. The bill would

declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute. The impact of Proposition 15 is expected to be approximately \$15 million per year over 25 years.

If Proposition 15 is approved, Los Angeles County will be allotted \$95 million toward a new regional crime laboratory/forensic teaching facility on the campus of California State University at Los Angeles which would be used by the Pasadena Police Department. Forensic crime laboratories are an important part of law enforcement. After a crime has been committed, evidence such as blood samples are sent to laboratories that collect, analyze and interpret evidence. These labs provide results for toxicology, bodily fluids from sexual assaults, blood alcohol content, arson, explosives, ballistics, drug analysis and DNA identification and testing.

The need for this facility has been documented in light of the extensive problems associated with current large law enforcement crime labs during recent high profile cases. A committee of representatives from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, California State University Los Angeles (CSULA), the Los Angeles Police Department and the California Criminalistics Institute of the California Department of Justice identified personnel and equipment overcrowding in the current law enforcement crime labs to be a major concern. There is virtually no space to process evidence on property cases, such as burglaries, because priority is given to crimes against persons. A common goal was identified of building a new regional crime laboratory/ forensic science teaching facility on the campus of CSULA.

A new regional forensic science center of this magnitude (a gross area of 326,000 square feet) has been estimated to cost \$132 million. The regional center would be used by all law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County and provide an significantly increased level of forensic science services and improved turn around time in processing evidence for all agencies in the Los Angeles County area, including the Pasadena Police Department. The money from Proposition 15 can only be used to renovate, repair and construct crime laboratories. It cannot be used for administrative salaries.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Passage of this legislation could result in \$95 million in revenue to fund the construction of a new regional forensic crime laboratory to be used by Los Angeles County law enforcement agencies. The source of revenue for the bonds is the General Fund of the State of California including income taxes, corporate taxes, and sales taxes. There are no direct costs to the City of Pasadena associated with the construction of the laboratory.

Respectfully submitted,

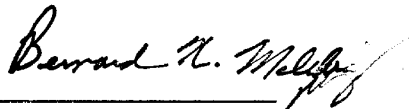
  
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