



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

NEWS RELEASE

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**GRAND JURY FINDS BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MUST
ENGAGE, LEAD AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**

When required to respond to a Sacramento County Grand Jury report showing a less than robust record of leadership at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Grand Jury found that the Board of Supervisors has opted to dodge and deflect. But the Grand Jury's deep concern, plainly stated in that February 2022 report, continues.

In the Grand Jury's newly issued Status Review, it finds that the Board's responses to the Grand Jury report reflect the Board's continuing refusal to acknowledge or accept responsibility for any deficiencies of leadership, accountability or engagement at the outset of the 2020 countywide emergency.

The Grand Jury in its February 2022 report called out the Board for lack of oversight and leadership during the first five critical months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Grand Jury conducted extensive research and interviews which found: 1) the Board of Supervisors handed off essential decision-making and CARES Act funding responsibility to its County Executive, or his designee; 2) the Board did not receive timely reports on allocation of CARES Act funds; 3) it failed to demand regular public updates on County pandemic activities; and 4) the Board failed to provide public forums to assess the vast array of needs and challenges faced by residents across Sacramento County.

The record of Board sessions speaks for itself: No actions were taken to publicly account for use of emergency funding, engaging with local residents and businesses, and even with its own agency heads, and is documented in the Grand Jury report.

It was this pattern of lack of leadership, engagement and oversight that was contained in the Grand Jury's report, and the basis of its findings and recommendations. The Grand Jury found that in the Board's response, it unfortunately cloaks itself in bureaucratic, misleading, and at times inaccurate statements.

The Board of Supervisors' position that there is 'nothing to see here' reflects the precise leadership and accountability deficiencies outlined in the Report. Sacramento County needs and deserves engaged, accountable leadership from Supervisors. This became clear during the pandemic.

The Report provides a roadmap toward improved County governance to better serve its residents. The Grand Jury remains concerned that the Board's apparent refusal to acknowledge any deficiencies will leave the County ill-prepared and vulnerable to the next inevitable public emergency. The Grand Jury strongly urges the Board to carefully reconsider the recommendations contained in its Report.