



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATEMENT**

***Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas calls for U.S. Department of Justice intervention to help turn around the deeply troubled Los Angeles County Department of Probation***

*The Supervisor stated his position on the Huffington Post ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-ridleythomas/probation-needs-justice\\_b\\_621815.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-ridleythomas/probation-needs-justice_b_621815.html)) and on KPCC's "Air Talk" (<http://scpr.org/programs/airtalk/2010/06/23/scrutinizing-internal-investigations-at-la-countys/>)*

"We need the authority and resources of the federal government.

The County has been trying for years to right this troubled department. The problems at Probation are too great to drop at the feet of a new manager alone. The Board of Supervisors has attempted to fix the department over the years through various motions. We've tried to repair the department from within, and we now know the results.

Enough time has passed, without enough progress, that it's time to give the Department's leaders new, more powerful tools to do their job. For too long, the Department has been unable to stop lawless behavior.

We've now seen enough to be sure of this: we can't wait for the Probation Department to fix itself. The County must now seek a broader Justice Department probe of its entire operation. Justice has this authority.

The problems at Probation are spread far beyond the confines of remote youth camps. County audits and the Department's own investigations have found evidence of wrongdoing by managers and probation officers throughout the Department.

The process of reform must be broadened and deepened. It must engage parents, educators, and others in neighborhoods throughout the County, especially those communities with a high proportion of youths in the probation system."

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