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# SIREN

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SERVICES,  
IMMIGRANT  
RIGHTS AND  
EDUCATION  
NETWORK

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March 15, 2007

City of San Jose  
200 East Santa Clara Street  
San Jose , CA 95113

Dear Mayor Reed, San Jose City Councilmembers, and  
Members of the Sunshine Reform Task Force:

On behalf of SIREN, the leading immigrant rights group in San Jose , I would like to offer our perspective on the issue of open public records regarding the San Jose Police Department. There are a number of important issues for the various immigrant communities which I would hope would warrant your attention on this subject.

SIREN endorses the call for greater openness and access to San Jose Police Department Records. We believe that, with limited exceptions, SJPD records and reports should be available for public review. We support the specific proposals in the draft sunshine ordinance put forward by the San Jose Mercury News and the League of Women Voters.

The success of community policing policies, in my opinion, is based in trust. Thus the need to pass Councilmember Liccardo's resolution creating a larger, more visible barrier between San Jose Police and ICE. This type of action obviously creates more trust.

So a woman seeking help in a domestic violence situation will be much more likely to seek assistance from the police if there is a strong, trusting relationship with immigrants and the police. A woman's life could depend on it.

In order for this relationship to be a strong relationship, SIREN believes it is also necessary for the police activities to be as transparent as possible. Rumors are always rife in tense times and providing transparency in police records serves to diffuse rumors and again, support the faith in the police department.

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(408) 453-3017

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It is a new day in San Jose with transparency and public trust key phrases in government. SIREN shares those community values. We would like to see all community members trust the police and feel the need for the government to act as the ultimate role model in showing the city the way to this goal.

Working collaboratively with the Task Force and community groups will go a long way to shining a needed light on the new at City Hall.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Yours in Community Spirit,

Gloria Nieto  
Policy Director, SIREN