



2016-2017
Kern County
Grand Jury Final Report

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SEE www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury FOR COMPLETE FINAL REPORT

2016 – 2017 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY

MEMBERS

NAME	TERM SERVED	CITY	NOMINATING JUDGE
Aguilu, Brad	2016-2017	Tehachapi	Hon. John Oglesby
Amstead, R. Renn	2016-2017	Tehachapi	Hon. John Oglesby
Ardis, Dwayne	2015-2016, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Jon S. Somers
Boyance, Patricia	2011-2012, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Collette Humphrey
Carney, Joellen	2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Michael G. Bush
Cooter, Marc	2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Michael G. Bush
Elliott, Dennis Mike	2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Collette Humphrey
Garcia, Jr. Fred	2015-2016, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Jon S. Somers
Golembefskie, Pat	2013-2014, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Steven M. Katz
House, Judith	2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. John Brownlee
McCreedy, Richard	2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. John W. Lua
McNatt, Michael	2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2016-2017	Tehachapi	Hon. John Oglesby
Ngo, Hoang	2015-2016, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Jon. S. Somers
Otero, Johnny	2016-2017	Lake Isabella	Hon. Eric Bradshaw
Pasek, Thomas	2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Eric Bradshaw
Russell, Portia	2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Eric Bradshaw
Schnopp, Danny	2012-2013, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Stephen Schuett
Smith, Mark	2015-2016, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Jon S. Somers
Vasquez, Teresa	2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2016-2017	Bakersfield	Hon. Michael G. Bush

ALSO SERVED:

Steve Agerton

Cynthia Cooper

Yvette Gonzalez

Don Johnson

Johnny Munoz

2016-2017 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY



MISSION STATEMENT

The first Kern County Grand Jury was appointed by the Kern County Board of Supervisors in 1866. Over these past 150 years, the Grand Jury mission has not changed. The mission is to be the “Watchdog” for the public.

Kern County covers 8,163 square miles, encompasses 11 incorporated cities, 48 unincorporated communities, and over 150 special districts. This includes water, cemetery, parks and recreation, public utilities, and community services districts, among others.

The Grand Jury is not answerable to any administration, politician or legislator, manager, supervisor or board member, so it is able to operate with immunity and without fear of retribution. For this reason, the Grand Jury is free to investigate the operation of all local governments, to ensure that they all comply with fiduciary responsibilities and are governing effectively.

The Grand Jury Standing Committees are: Administration, Audit and County Services; Cities and Joint Powers; Special Districts; Health, Education, and Social Services; and Law and Justice. The Grand Jury is mandated by law to oversee all county and local law enforcement agencies, non-federal penal facilities, and juvenile facilities within Kern County. A recent court ruling allows the Grand Jury to investigate police involved shootings.

The Grand Jury may also hear criminal indictments brought by the District Attorney’s Office for a criminal or civil offense. The Grand Jury may consider a case against a public officer for malfeasance or an accusation.

Grand Jury Activities

- California Grand Jurors' Association Foreperson and Jury Training, Visalia
- California Grand Jurors' Association Report Writing Workshop, Bakersfield
- California Grand Jurors' Association Training, Visalia
- Kern County Grand Jury Association Quarterly meetings, Bakersfield
- Visit and inspection of the Edmondson Pumping Station, Kern County
- Visit the Kern County Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit, Bakersfield
- Visit the Kern County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit, Bakersfield
- Visit and tour of the Bakersfield City Police Department K-9 Unit, Bakersfield
- Visit the Kern County Sheriff's Office Central receiving Facility, Bakersfield
- Visit the Kern County Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad team, Bakersfield
- Visit and inspection of the Kern County Probation Department Camp Owen, Kernville
- Visit of the Kern County Probation Department Crossroads Facility, Bakersfield
- Visit and inspection of 12 prisons
- Kern County Grand Jury Awareness Week Ceremony
 - Kern County Board of Supervisors Proclamation presented by Supervisor Mike Maggard
- Responded to over 42 citizen complaints
- Released over 26 Final Reports
- Conducted one criminal indictment for the District Attorney's Office
- Public Awareness Booth at the Bakersfield Home and Garden Show, three days
- Public Awareness at the Kern County Retired Employees, Bakersfield
- Monitored and participated in the audit of voting machines for the Kern County Elections Department
- Open discussions with various guest speakers
- Kern County Grand Jurors' Association Condor Night
- Jurors' served over 16,000 hours



GRAND JUROR'S OATH

The following oath is administered to Grand Jurors:

"I do solemnly swear (affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and of the State of California, and all laws made pursuant to and in conformity therewith, will diligently inquire into, and true presentment make, of all public offenses against the people of this state, committed or triable within this county, of which the grand jury shall have or can obtain legal evidence. Further, I will not disclose any evidence brought before the grand jury, nor anything which I or any other grand juror may say, nor the manner in which I or any other grand juror may have voted on any matter before the grand jury. I will keep the charge that will be given to me by the court."

(§ 911, Penal Code)

ADVISOR JUDGES



Honorable John S. Somers

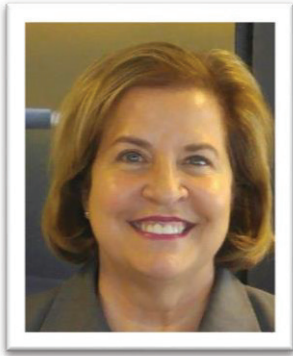
Presiding Judge January 2015 – December 2016



Honorable Charles R. Brehmer

Presiding Judge January 2017 - Present

SUPPORT STAFF



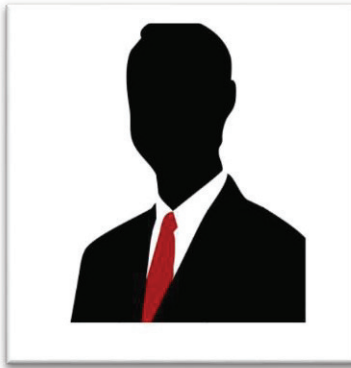
**TERESA GOLDNER
COUNTY COUNSEL**



**MARK NATIONS
INTERIM COUNTY COUNSEL**



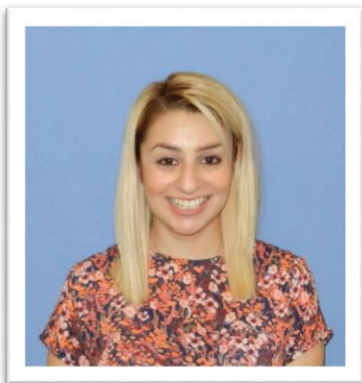
**GREG PULSKAMP
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**



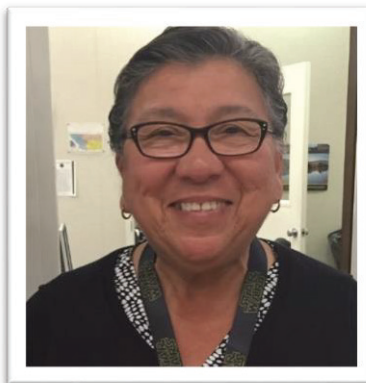
**DON KRUEGER
INVESTIGATOR
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**



**TERRY McNALLY
COURT
EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



**JULIE FLOREZ
GRAND JURY
LIAISON**



**GLORIA RANGLE
SR. OFFICE SERVICES
SPECIALIST**



**STACY GARNER
PRESIDING
SECRETARY**



Kern County **GRAND JURY**

June 20, 2017

2016 – 2017

Dwayne Ardis
Foreperson

Bradley Aguilu

R. Renn Amstead

Patricia Boyance

Joellen Carney

Marc Cooter

Mike Elliott

Fredrick Garcia, Jr.

Patricia Golembefskie

Judith House

Richard McCreedy

Michael McNatt

Hoang Ngo

Johnny Otero

Thomas L. Pasek

Portia Russell

Danny Schnopp

Mark Smith

Teresa Vasquez

The Honorable Charles R. Brehmer, Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 212
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Judge Brehmer:

As the 2016-2017 Kern County Grand Jury term comes to an end, I am pleased submit our Final Report.

This year's Grand Jury consisted of nineteen Jurors and six alternates from all over Kern County. On behalf of the Jury and myself, I would like to thank you Judge Brehmer for your time, knowledge and support that you have given to this Grand Jury. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Kern County. A special thanks to Judge Jon Somers for his confidence in me to serve as Foreperson this year.

As with every other Grand Jury in the past, our Grand Jury came together to serve a single purpose, to serve the people of Kern County by being their watch dog. To all of my fellow Jurors, I and all of the citizens of Kern County, say thank you.

This year's Grand Jury performed their duties with dedication and precision. We successfully completed our investigations and wrote reports, answered citizen complaints, and stayed within our operating budget. We also successfully completed one criminal indictment that was brought to us by Cynthia Zimmer from the Kern County District Attorney's office. Criminal indictments are an important function of the Grand Jury system. We also completed some high profile investigations that made a positive impact on Kern County. We all learned a great deal about County and City governments from our inspection tours and guest speakers throughout the year.

Appreciation, special recognition, and thanks must also be given to the members of the Kern County Superior Court system: Assistant Judicial Secretary Julie Flores; and Court Executive Officer, Terry McNally. Also a special thanks to: Retired County Counsel Theresa Goldner and Interim County Counsel, Mark Nations; Clerk of the Board, Kathleen Krause; District Attorney Investigator, Don Krueger; County Sheriff, Donny Youngblood; Assistant County Administrative Officer for General Services, Jeff Frapwell; ITS Division Chief, John Devlin; Grand Jury's Senior Office Services Specialist, Gloria Rangel; and the Kern County Board of Supervisors. Each one of these has played a major role in making this a successful Grand Jury.

As Foreperson, I would like to once again extend my thanks to you and your staff for all of your support. Being selected as Foreperson is a privilege and this experience will be forever cherished. Hopefully, I will have the opportunity to serve again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Ardis".

Dwayne Ardis, Foreperson
2016-2017 Kern County Grand Jury

2016-2017 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY



**DWAYNE ARDIS
FOREPERSON**

2016-2017 OFFICERS



JOHNNY OTERO
PARLIAMENTARIAN
FEE MANAGER



MARK SMITH
PRO TEM



JUDI HOUSE
RECORDING SECRETARY



RICHARD McCREEDY
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



MIKE ELLIOTT
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

2016-2017 GRAND JURY FORMAL STATEMENT

Grand juries have existed in the State of California since the adoption of the State's Constitution in 1849-1850. The Constitution requires that a Grand Jury "be drawn and summoned at least once a year in each county." According to Kern County Board of Supervisors records, the first Grand Jury was selected in 1867. The Board of Supervisors meeting minutes, although very difficult to read, reflected, "Apportionment of persons to be selected and returned from various townships to serve as Grand and Trial Jurors for the year 1867." This would have been the first Kern County Grand Jury. At that time, names of persons to serve were drawn from the property tax assessment roll. One hundred and fifty-one years later, the 2016-2017 Kern County Grand Jury was selected by a blind draw of over 30 volunteers. Nineteen jurors and alternates were selected to represent Kern County and sworn in by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court to uphold the Grand Juror's Oath.

All Grand Juries are independent judicial bodies. Responsibilities include investigating all aspects of County government, special districts, cities within the County and citizen complaints, to ensure that these bodies govern effectively and efficiently. The Grand Jury is considered to be the "watchdog" for the citizens of the County and "an arm of the court". The Grand Jury also functions as an investigative "criminal" body, conducting hearings which can lead to indictments by the Attorney General and the District Attorney's office. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Grand Jury may subpoena persons and/or records to obtain information on subjects under investigation. To protect the constitutional rights of parties being investigated, the Grand Jurors are sworn to lifelong confidentiality.

The Grand Jury conducts business at a "plenary", a weekly general meeting. Actions taken during the year are considered to be official Grand Jury business, and must be approved by at least twelve of the nineteen Jurors.

The 2016-2017 Kern County Grand Jury consisted of nineteen volunteers from Tehachapi, Lake Isabella and Bakersfield. Thirteen men and six women served approximately 175 days, four days a week, five hours a day to fulfill their responsibilities to the citizens of Kern County. Jurors served on one of five standing committees: Administration, Audit, and County Services; Cities and Joint Powers; Special Districts; Health, Education, and Social Services; or Law and Justice. Additional committees were appointed to help fulfill the Grand Jury duties: Edit and Final Report; Budget; Public Relations; Library; and Ad Hoc Committees. This Grand Jury Final Report contains reports, activities, and the work of each committee.

PROCLAMATION

The Board of Supervisors
of the County of Kern,
State of California
has officially proclaimed

February 6 - 10, 2017



as
**Grand Jury Public Awareness Week
in Kern County**

and this recognition has
been entered in the
official Board minutes

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the Chairman of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, positioned above the title.

CHAIRMAN, KERN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

February 7, 2017

DATE



2016-2017 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY AWARENESS WEEK FEBRUARY 6-10, 2017



REPRESENTATIVES FOR

Congressman David Valadao
Senator Jean Fuller
Assemblyman Vincent Fong
Assemblyman Rudy Salas



PRESENT

Judge Charles Brehmer
Kendra Graham -
Kern County Counsel
Ryan Alsop -
County Administrative Officer

GUESTS

Redwood High School
Color Guard
Pastor Angelo Frazier -
RiverLakes Community Church
Kern County Grand
Jurors' Association



U.S. House of Representatives

CERTIFICATE OF CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Presented to

Kern County Grand Jury

Grand Jury Awareness Week ~ 151st Anniversary of service to Kern County residents

***In recognition of outstanding and invaluable service
to the community.***

February 9th, 2017

DATE

DAVID G. VALADAO
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Presented to:

Kern County Grand Jury

In recognition of your

**One Hundred and Fifty-first
Anniversary Celebration**

Please accept my sincere congratulations and best wishes.

*Thursday, February 9, 2017
Bakersfield, California*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean Fuller". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Jean Fuller, Senator 16th District

C A L I F O R N I A L E G I S L A T U R E



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Presented to

Kern County Grand Jury

In Honor of

Your service to the residents of Kern County & recognition
of Grand Jury Awareness Week.

February 9, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rudy Salas'.

RUDY SALAS

Assemblymember, 32nd District



Assembly

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Presented to:

Celebrating Grand Jury Awareness Week

In recognition of your

151st Anniversary and Service To Kern County



*Thursday, February 9, 2017
Bakersfield, California*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vince Fong". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Vince Fong, Assemblymember 34th District

2016-2017 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY VETERANS



...We have served

Tom Pasek

Dwayne Ardis

Hoang Ngo

Brad Aguilu

Fred Garcia

Richard McCreedy