

P.O. Box 862007 Los Angeles, CA 90086

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Local148.org

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Mr. Ricardo García Law Offices of the Los Angeles County Public Defender 210 W. Temple St., 19th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. García,

Our office is in crisis. You must take immediate action to address excessive workloads by going unavailable. Our attorneys have reached the point where they can no longer continue to accept new cases while continuing to provide effective representation to our clients. The problem is only becoming more acute due to the increase in attorneys leaving the office, as well as attorneys taking leave due to burnout caused by unmanageable workloads.

"Chief Defenders are responsible for causing the health of the workforce to be monitored to avoid burnout and damage to employees." (Cal. State Bar: *Guideline on Indigent Defense Services Delivery* Systems (2006) 29.) Chief Defenders also "[b]ear the ultimate responsibility for assuring that workloads are not excessive in volume for any individual institutional public defender employee." (*Id.* at 28.) We are urging that you declare our office unavailable to stem the flow of incoming new cases, and to address the increasing burnout of our attorneys.

While we appreciate the efforts management has taken to attempt to alleviate the workload crisis, including increasing long-term funding goals, these measures are not sufficient to address the immediate emergency. Declaring unavailability is the only solution that will allow us to comply with our ethical obligations to our clients. It is squarely within your power, and, more importantly, it is your ethical obligation, to declare unavailability in our office:



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"Should a Chief Defender determine that the combination of the existing and incoming workload exceeds the capacity of institutional defender employees (all of them not only lawyers) to provide necessary services in a competent fashion in a timely manner and without unduly risking the health of the defender workforce, it is incumbent upon such a Chief Defender to secure the additional resources necessary or to refuse to accept that portion of the incoming workload that exceeds the capacity of the defender program." (Cal. State Bar: Guideline on Indigent Defense Services Delivery Systems (2006) 29; ABA: Eight Guidelines of Public Defense Related to Excessive Workloads (2009), Guideline 5, 6.)

"Failure of a Chief Defender to effectively address workloads may result in personal liability for an adverse civil judgment and jeopardize the right of the Chief Defender to practice law in any capacity." (Cal. State Bar: Guideline on Indigent Defense Services Delivery Systems (2006) 30 and fn. 20 [Miranda v. Clark County, Nevada (2003) 319 F.3d 465, 471; In Re Matter of Robert Pinto Public Defender San Benito County (Cal. State Bar Ct. Case No. 93-0-10027); Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6086.7(a)(2)].)

We, the employees of this office, approach our work as not just a job, but as a vocation. We are dedicated to serving as public defenders and want to continue to be able to effectively represent our clients. Going unavailable is an immediate and temporary solution that will allow us to continue to do so. By signing this letter, we are officially and unequivocally requesting that you declare our office unavailable and are providing notice of our, as well as your, ethical obligations as it relates to our workloads and the representation of our clients.

Sincerely,

Local 148 Board

#### President Christine Rodriguez

Karen Nash



Kelly Greco

Deborah Hong



Rubenia Mejia

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Derek Dillman



Johnny Alcala



**Alison Brown** 





Diana Geng



Jeremy Lishman



Ann-Yu Wang



Marie Lui Boyer

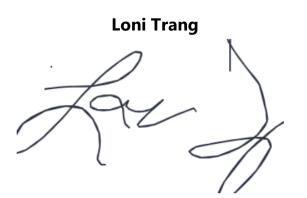
Thalia Singer

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Sherise Parker



Shanan Boghigian



Hasan Ramadan

**David Cañas** 

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**Denise Savonne** 



Jose Alberto Ruvalcaba



Justin Clayton



**Elizabeth Warner-Sterkenburg** 

Towas

Alison Hudak



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**Avneet Chattha** 





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**Sheryl Bailey** 

**Donald Lee** 



**Jennifer Hoskins** 



Sonjia White

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Candace Wong

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Molly Kort

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**Eduardo Doering** 



**Allison Drew** 

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Cecilia Equihua

Alan Isamu Nakazone

Delaram Kamalpour

n

Yajahira Mercado



**Stephanie Hyland Zacarias** 

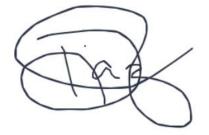
Albert Camacho, Jr.

Nima Farhadi

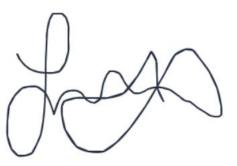
# **Christine Rodriguez**



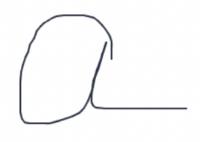
Andrea Díaz



Lorenmarie Manning



Arvin Sachdeva



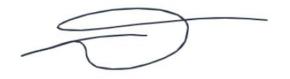
Stephanie Salceda



Maggie Mendez

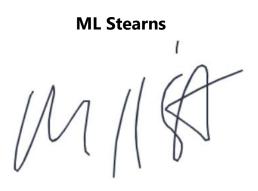


Doreen Anthony LaCaille



Donna Tryfman





**Omid Haghighat** 



**Tiffany Morales** 

Robert F. McBirney

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**Eunice Wong** 



Allison Hardgrove

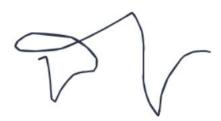
Sabrina Hashim

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Diana Tsang



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James Kim

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**Adrian Garcia** 

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Sebo Moradian

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**Jannet Santiso** 



Jacqueline Brand



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Nicholas Ynda

**Daniel Sandino Navarro** 

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Yungsheng Wang

Jacqueline Baskerville



**Brooke Longuevan** 

Peter G. Schmied



**Harvey Sherman** 

Ronald "L" Tripp

Jonathan Mendoza



Adella Gorgen

Akio Katano

Alexandra Trantham

Celia Benitez-Balderrama

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**Drew Havens** 



Sumita Dalal

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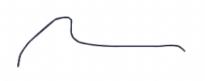
**Michelle Loulis** 



Alexander Kirkpatrick



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Donna Gomez

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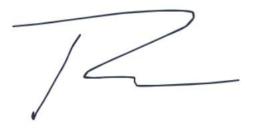
Stephanie Lo



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Laurel Mend



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## Chrashawn Jackson



# Vianney Moran

Herman B. Santos



**Crystal Ventura** 

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Salena Tiet



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Marta Eggers

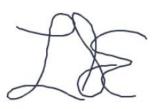


Tamara Kagel



**Alexandra Markus** 

Lauren S. Ellis



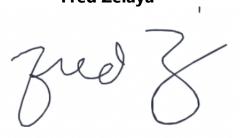
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Nancy Ross

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Fred Zelaya



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Lydia Marquez

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Bryan Rowe

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Randy Na



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Katherine DeGovia

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#### Shannon Belsheim

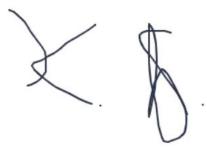


Wayne Suzukawa

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Monique McDavid

# Keyvan Shakeri



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**Rosann Scoloveno** 

## Danielle O'Sullivan



Hooman Kazemi

Elizabeth Braunstein

# Eyvin Hernandez

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**Rochelle Tunstall** 

Dana E. Branen

Dan

# Cynthia Nilssen-Vargas



**Sheila Sattar** 



Jordana Siracusa

Romina Aghai



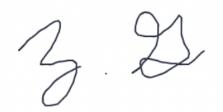
**Ernesto Diaz** 



Holly Hancock

Marie Geelen

## Zalondria Graham



## Anne Gillam

# Phillip Okonma



Amanda Manalo

Hope Vannorsdall

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**Robin Ginsburg** 

Daryne Nicole

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Sanaz E. Ahari

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Megan Cherry

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Aaron Jansen

Paul Golub

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Parker Shea Sampson

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**Mark Carrillo** 

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**Elizabeth Lashley-Haynes** 

**Claire Krystkiewicz** 

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Brian Woo

**Dennis Yamamoto** 

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#### La Shae Henderson



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Evan Franzel

Lorena Torres



**David Valenzuela** 

**Deborah Baltaxe** 

Toral Malik