

LAW OFFICES OF  
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ATTORNEY ■ MEDIATOR

January 23, 2012

The Honorable Doreen Farr, Supervisor of the Third District  
Via Email to: [dfarr@countyofsb.org](mailto:dfarr@countyofsb.org)

Dear Supervisor Farr:

RE: *Recruitment for Board position of the Santa Barbara County Employees Retirement System*

I am the Labor Representative for the Engineers and Technician Association (“ETA”) and I want to make you aware of an issue that is very important to ETA. During the January 24, 2012 meeting of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, you will be considering recommendations to fill a vacancy on the Board of the Santa Barbara County Employee Retirement System (SBCERS). After reviewing the Board Letter and the applications submitted by interested persons, ETA has serious concerns about the recruitment process.

As stated in the Board Letter, those who were interested in the position were to submit applications by December 23, 2011. The Board Letter went on to say that three applications were received by that deadline while a fourth, from Mr. Trent Benedetti, was received on January 9, 2012. We are puzzled as to why an application submitted after the stated deadline was not disqualified and why someone who submitted a late application is still being considered for the position.

It has also come to our attention that Mr. Benedetti sits on two County Commissions/Boards. These include the County Assessment Appeals Board and the Santa Barbara County Finance Corporation. Mr. Benedetti’s appointment to SBCERS appear to be in conflict with Government Code §31520 that states, in part, “the fourth and fifth (Retirement Board) members shall be qualified electors of the county who are not connected to county government in any capacity except one may be a (Board) supervisor and one may be a retired member and shall be chosen by the Board of Supervisors.”

The filling of a position on the Board of the SBCERS is an important decision. The process of choosing a Board member should follow the established process and all criteria should be fairly applied. ETA is concerned that there is an appearance that this selection process is not consistent with the established protocol.

Thank you for considering our opinion on this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Henry J. Bongiovi

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