

PRESS STATEMENT: Former Sheriff Baca's Plea Deal

For Immediate Release: February 11th, 2016

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Los Angeles, C.A. – While former Sheriff Baca pleads guilty to federal charges of lying to FBI investigators, members of our community who have experienced sheriff department abuse are feeling both vindicated and unsatisfied. Sheriff Baca not only lied to the FBI but in meetings with the Coalition to End Sheriff Violence Sheriff Baca lied to community members by claiming that the brutality their loved ones experienced was justified and that the oversight that existed at the time was the gold standard of transparency. Three years later Black and Brown Los Angeles County residents who bear the brunt of law enforcement misconduct and brutality have fought and won a more comprehensive oversight system that includes independent civilian oversight of the largest jail system in the country.

As former Sheriff Baca awaits trial, survivors of the rampant abuse that took place on his watch are left with the reality that in the end Baca was able to cut a deal with his guilty plea. There are no shortcuts or deals for the trauma that Black and Brown families and formerly incarcerated people still endure. It's likely that the upcoming trial of Paul Tanaka will further expose the depth and scale of corruption throughout the department. Our members have accounts of abuse that stretch back to the beginnings of Baca's leadership. As the county continues to pursue reforms of the department the currently proposed civilian oversight commission would allow former sheriff department employees who have been off duty for a year to serve on this body. Almost two decades of corruption and brutality under Baca's leadership is the clearest sign that former sheriff's deputies have no place in independent civilian oversight of the sheriff's department regardless of how long they have been off duty. **We are looking to the county supervisors to amend the current model to restrict former sheriff's department employees from sitting on this commission – as Baca's guilt is a clear example that the department is incapable of holding itself accountable.**

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