February 4, 2014

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 329
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution Increasing Vehicle Registration Fees by One Dollar In Support Of Countywide Auto Theft Prevention, Investigation, and Prosecution Efforts

Dear Board Members,

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution assessing an additional one dollar fee for each vehicle registered within the County of Marin for the exclusive purpose of enhancing local law enforcement and prosecutor’s capacity to deter, investigate and prosecute vehicle theft crimes. Adoption of this resolution will bring the total fee collected for that purpose to two dollars per registered vehicle within Marin County.

SUMMARY:

On November 5th, 1991, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted Resolution 91-241 directing the California Department of Motor Vehicles to collect a one dollar fee from each vehicle registration that occurred within the County of Marin. California Vehicle Code Section 9250.14 authorized the collection of that fee as a means of enhancing local efforts to deter, investigate, and prosecute vehicle theft crimes.

In Marin County, the collected fees were divided evenly between local law enforcement and the District Attorney’s Office. In turn, local law enforcement agreed to use their allocated funds to provide one police officer or deputy sheriff to the Marin County Auto Theft Task Force, and in turn the District Attorney’s Office agreed to dedicate members of his staff to prosecute the cases that would result.

When the 1991 Resolution was adopted, the amount of revenue generated from the one dollar fee was able to fully cover the various staff costs

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associated with these auto theft initiatives. However, the revenue that fee created has remained largely flat for the past 22 years, while salary and benefit costs have not.

For the past 5 years, the Marin County Sheriff’s Office has provided one FTE deputy sheriff to the Auto Theft Task Force, but has needed General Fund monies to close the gap between the actual cost of providing that FTE and the amount of money allocated by the Department by the DMV for that service. The Marin County District Attorney’s Office has found itself in a similar situation and neither is now able to cover the staff costs associated with the Auto Theft Task Force’s operations.

In addition to the cost of providing staff to the County’s Auto Theft Task Force, the Sheriff’s Office also incurs the expense of supplying necessary services and supplies to that Unit, such as undercover vehicles, bait cars, and miscellaneous office equipment as well.

At the request of Marin County Sheriff Robert T. Doyle and the California State Sheriffs’ Association, Assembly member Marc Levine authored and introduced Assembly Bill 767, authorizing each California county, upon adoption of a resolution by its elected Board of Supervisors, to increase the amount collected in support of its auto theft prevention and prosecution efforts by one dollar, to a new total of two dollars per vehicle registered within that County.

In authoring his bill, Assembly member Levine took particular note of the success Marin County had achieved in curtailing auto theft related crime. More specifically, Mr. Levine noted that while between July 2012 and August 2013 there were 705 motor vehicles stolen in Marin County, more than 91% of those cars were eventually recovered and returned to their rightful owners. Mr. Levine reported the County of Marin was in fact receiving over five dollars’ worth of value for each dollar in state auto theft money it spent.

AB 767 eventually received overwhelming support from the California State Legislature and was later signed into law by Governor Brown before the close of the 2013 legislative session.

District Attorney Ed Berberian and I both ask that the Board of Supervisors increase the fee collected for deterring, investigating and prosecuting auto theft related crime to the new $2.00 dollar limit, allowing both Offices to once again fully cover the cost of their respective commitments to this important program without General Fund support.

**FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT:**

During FY 12-13, the Sheriff’s and District Attorney’s Offices each received $116,500 dollars from the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to Vehicle
Code Section 9250.14. Adoption of this Resolution will effectively double the amount of money being allocated to Marin County for auto theft prevention and prosecution and allow the District Attorney and me to continue funding this valuable program, both now, and into the foreseeable future, without the previously required offsetting revenue from the County's General Fund.

REVIEWED BY:  [X] County Administrator   [ ] N/A
               [X] County Counsel       [ ] N/A
               [ ] Department of Finance [X] N/A
               [ ] Human Resources       [X] N/A

SIGNATURE:

ROBERT T. DOYLE
SHERIFF-CORONER