REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION

November 4, 2008

FROM: PAUL BIANE, Chairman and Second District Supervisor
      Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: CENSURE OF ASSESSOR BILL POSTMUS

RECOMMENDATION(S)
Approve and issue the Letter of Censure dated November 4, 2008 to Assessor Bill Postmus
expressing concern related to the alleged unlawful political activity in the Assessor’s office
and the allegations of the Assessor’s illegal methamphetamine use.
(Affected Districts: All)
(Presenter: Supervisor Paul Biane, Second District, 387-4833)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
On October 20, 2008, Paul Biane, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, sent a letter to
Assessor Bill Postmus expressing concern over the alleged unlawful political activity in the
Assessor’s office as reported by the 2007-08 Grand Jury, and the ongoing allegations of
illegal methamphetamine drug use. In addition, the Board of Supervisors has requested, in
writing, and verbally at the July 15, 2008 Board of Supervisors meeting, that the Assessor
appear before the Board to publicly address the allegations relative to the operations of the
Assessor’s office. In response, Mr. Postmus has declined to appear before the Board and
refuses to address, publicly or otherwise, these most serious allegations.

The Board is deeply concerned that Mr. Postmus may have ordered or at the very least
condoned unethical and unlawful actions of his employees. Mr. Postmus still has not
adequately addressed the allegations of methamphetamine use raised in multiple media
reports. We, as elected public officials, must maintain the public’s confidence in County
government. As an elected official, Mr. Postmus cannot be allowed to further compromise
the public’s trust by refusing to be accountable to the people he was elected to serve.

The County’s codes of ethics set forth expectations of professional conduct so that we may
continually earn the public’s respect and confidence. The actions by Mr. Postmus undermine
this effort. On the public’s behalf, the Board of Supervisors should consider taking the
extreme but clearly necessary step of issuing a letter of censure to Mr. Postmus.
Such action will make clear the Board of Supervisors' official position on Mr. Postmus' ongoing refusal to candidly and publically address these disturbing questions that continue to trouble the public, eroding their and our trust in the Assessor, as he continues to demonstrate an apparent unwillingness to abide by the ethical standards by which all elected officials must conduct themselves.

Attached is the proposed letter of censure for the Board's consideration and issuance.

FINANCIAL IMPACT
None

REVIEW BY OTHERS
This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Ruth Stringer, County Counsel, 387-5451) on October 30, 2008; Second Supervisorial District (Matt Brown, Chief of Staff, 387-4833) on October 30, 2008.