PAI Protection & Advocacy Inc.

Advancing the rights of Californians with disabilities

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M E M O R A N D U M

To: Law Enforcement Agencies
County District Attorneys
Regional Center Directors
Clients' Rights Advocates
Other Interested Parties

From: Leslie Morrison
Director, Investigations Unit

Re: Release of Public Advisory: Law Enforcement's Response to the Sexual Assault of Daniel Sharp

Date: October 23, 2006

Protection & Advocacy, Inc. (PAI) is California's designated disability advocacy agency, established under federal law to protect, advocate for and advance the rights of Californians with disabilities.[1] Under state and federal law, PAI has the authority to investigate incidents of abuse and neglect of persons with developmental and other disabilities.

PAI issues this public advisory which describes the poor response by one law enforcement agency to the report of a sexual assault from Mr. Sharp, a man with a developmental disability. By releasing this report, PAI hopes to encourage law enforcement and others within the criminal justice system to respond promptly and impartially to allegations of assault involving people with developmental disabilities.

[1] PAI provides services pursuant to the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 15001, PL 106-402 and Welfare and Institutions Code § 4900.

People with developmental disabilities are at disproportionately high risk of abuse, neglect, and criminal victimization, with the estimated rate of sexual assault 2 -10 times higher for people with disabilities when compared to people without disabilities. Given their higher risk of victimization, the criminal justice system must respond with greater vigor to allegations involving victims with disabilities.

If you have questions about the public advisory, please contact Leslie Morrison at leslie.morrison@pai-ca.org or at the address above.