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April 6, 2016

Ms Francine C. Ecker, Director  
Department of Criminal Justice Services  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Director Ecker:

Since the founding of The Private Investigator's Association of Virginia, Inc. (PIAVA) more than thirty years ago, the Association has had both a positive and productive relationship with the Department. As a non-profit, professional organization of private investigative personnel, it is the goal of the Association to increase consumer awareness of the value and importance of hiring properly licensed, trained and experienced private investigators to perform private security services in the Commonwealth. To that end, we require that every member of PIAVA pledge not only to conduct their business activities in accordance with applicable provisions of statute and regulation, but in accordance with our Association's Code of Professional Ethics as well. To achieve our goals, we recognize the importance of maintaining an open and effective line of communication with the Department regarding its plans, policies and practices, especially those which affect the private security industry. As a result, I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal thanks and that of the membership of the Association for what we perceive has been a refocus of effort upon identifying and resolving a range of issues of critical importance to our industry.

As there has been growing dissatisfaction with both the performance and responsiveness of the Department in addressing a range of issues related to licensing, training and compliance enforcement, we were very heartened when an individual of Leon Baker's stature accepted our invitation to speak to our members on behalf of DCJS. We were also very heartened, indeed reassured, to learn from Leon that an internal reorganization of DCJS is pending, which is intended to enhance management oversight of the Department's delivery of those services to the private security industry. Because of its importance to both our industry and DCJS, we are looking forward to implementation of a credentialing management system that will meet both the Department's needs and provide a timely and effective means for applicants to obtain registration, certification and/or licensure from DCJS to perform regulated private security activities.

We recognize that DCJS has a broad mission and that a number of complex factors impact the Department's ability to effectively and efficiently discharge its responsibilities. It has been our experience that when parties on the various sides of an issue are willing to actively listen to the views of others; and, to tackle the resolution of problems head-on, optimum solutions can be devised to the satisfaction of all parties. During our Association's experience working with Leon Baker in the past, we have found that is the way he does business.

He is highly regarded in the industry not only because of his background as a general manager of a multi-state uniformed security company; but because of the breadth of his experience in effectively performing, managing and directing many facets of DCJS activities during his career with the Department. In our view, he has demonstrated time and again that he is always willing to listen; that he has a keen sensitivity to the needs of our industry, that he demonstrates an exemplary commitment to resolving problems that are brought to his attention; and importantly, that he is guided by a strong desire, first and foremost, to serve and protect the interests of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Baker's acceptance of an invitation to speak to our membership – well-knowing that dissatisfaction with DCJS services exists among our ranks – illustrates his personal commitment to maintaining open and effective lines of communication between the Department and the private security industry

We are hopeful that the performance improvements we have seen in recent months in DCJS licensure and regulatory oversight of the private security industry will continue. We recognize that it is within your prerogative to select the individual who will assist you in providing executive oversight of the Private Security industry; and we acknowledge that a number of factors must be taken into consideration when selecting personnel for key roles in the Department. Notwithstanding our acknowledgement of those principles, we would like to respectfully recommend that every consideration be given to the candidacy of an individual of Leon Baker's background, qualifications, reputation and stature in the industry, *if not Mr. Baker himself*, to lead the new Private Security component of DCJS.

Sincerely,

Todd R. Troutner  
President  
Private Investigators Association of Virginia