

CITIZENS alert working for humane law enforcement

1040 West Harrison Street Chicago, Illinois 60607 (312) 413-3444

May 13, 2013

U.S. Judge Susie Morgan
U.S. Eastern District Court of Louisiana
500 Poydras Street - C502
New Orleans, LA 70130

Re: **Public Comment : U.S. v. City of New Orleans, et al
#12-1924**

Dear Judge Morgan,

By way of introduction, Citizens Alert is a Chicago police accountability organization which recently marked its 46th year working for equal police protection and service to all Chicago-area residents. I was one of the founding members of this important organization and have served as its coordinator for many years. It is with this longtime experience in fighting for police accountability in Chicago that I write to express Citizens Alert's serious reservations regarding the possible appointment of Terry Hillard as monitor of the consent decree governing the New Orleans Police Department. We would be remiss if we did not inform you of the disappointing Chicago community experience with Mr. Hillard.

Throughout his tenure as Chicago Superintendent, Citizens Alert and a broad-based and diverse Coalition To End Police Torture and Brutality interacted with Superintendent Hillard at the monthly meetings of the Chicago Police Board, as well as on other occasions. He was always affable, courteous, and usually gracious, but routinely rejected community recommendations which would have increased the Chicago Police Department's public accountability or challenged the status quo which protected the CPD from constructive criticism.

Our most serious concern is Mr. Hillard's consistent stonewalling of community requests that he employ the authority of his office to reopen investigations of systematic torture by Jon Burge and CPD officers under his command. On August 2, 1999, we formally presented that request at a press conference, where public officials, religious and community leaders and concerned citizens urged him to take such an initiative. Predictably, after meeting with us, he rejected our request.

Like his predecessors, Superintendent Hillard's failure to act substantially contributed to the continuation of a decades long police torture scandal that only recently has resulted in the conviction of Jon Burge and its grudging and extremely belated recognition by City officials.

In the opinion of Citizens Alert and the Coalition, nothing in Mr. Hillard's responses to Chicago community concerns indicates an ability that would enable him to monitor the consent decree for New Orleans with the degree of objectivity and aggressiveness necessary to fulfill the duty of such an important obligation. We sincerely hope that the potential of the monitoring role is not compromised by the appointment of Mr. Hillard.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mary D. Powers

Mary D. Powers

Coordinator, Citizens Alert

Reply Forward