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## Court Upholds Proper Use of Civilian Workers in County Jails

(Santa Ana, CA) — A state appeals court has again ruled in favor of the County's use of civilian workers in the jail system, denying a demand by the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs for as much as \$8 million in damages.

The union, which represents about 2,000 deputy sheriffs, sued the County in 2010, claiming some jail duties had been improperly transferred from deputies to newly created civilian Correctional Services Assistants (CSAs). The move was estimated to save about \$8 million a year in salary and overtime costs, which the union sought to recover as damages.

The ruling by the Fourth District Court of Appeal, capping five years of legal wrangling, was released this week.

Supervisor Shawn Nelson, the only current supervisor on the Board when the lawsuit was filed, said the switch to CSAs was an innovative response to rising jail costs and "done for all the right reasons."

"We have a fiduciary duty for the benefit of everyone to get the most out of our public resources that we can," he said.

Correctional services assistants are non-sworn, highly-trained personnel who assist sworn officers in monitoring inmate movement, maintaining order and controlling entries and exits to jail facilities. CSAs are typically assigned to locations such as guard stations, which allow deputy sheriffs to maintain order by patrolling elsewhere throughout the jails.

In September 2012, the deputies union and the County reached agreement on the ongoing use of CSAs, which are represented by the Orange County Employees Association. The agreement includes a cap on the maximum number of CSAs that can be used in combination with deputy sheriffs. Non-sworn employees do not have to be state-certified, do not carry firearms and have no powers to arrest.

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