

# Press Releases

## 04/23/2008 | Long Beach City Auditor Supports Whistleblower Legislation

### State Law Would Protect Individuals Who Report Fraud Against Local Governments

Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud testified today before the California State Assembly Local Government Committee in support of AB 2001 (Swanson), commonly referred to as the "Whistleblower" legislation. This legislation would ensure anonymity for anyone reporting fraud or theft against municipalities.

After hearing of the support of all four of the California elected City Auditors, the Committee voted to pass the bill out of committee and on to the Assembly floor for consideration by the full Assembly.

"As a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Fraud Examiner, I know that fraud is a very serious problem that all local governments contend with and the City of Long Beach is no exception," City Auditor Laura Doud told the Committee.

The Long Beach City Auditor's office recently implemented a "Fraud Hotline" that allows anyone to report fraud or theft against the City. Research shows that nearly 50% of fraud that is detected is due to a "tip." "We encourage all City employees, citizens, contractors and other interested parties to be alert and report any suspected fraud against the City," stated City Auditor Laura Doud.

In Long Beach, the City Attorney believes that several sections of the Public Records Act currently protect the identities of whistleblowers who call the Fraud Hotline, such as provisions protecting personnel records and disclosures that are against the public interest. This legislation would make whistleblower protections explicit so that residents of all cities could rest assured that their identities would be confidential when calling their local fraud hotlines.

City Auditor Laura Doud was invited to testify before the Committee by Oakland City Auditor Courtney Ruby who has led the charge for this Whistleblower legislation in Sacramento. The Whistleblower legislation has gained significant support from others including City Controller/Auditor Laura Chick (Los Angeles), Ann-Marie Hogan (Berkeley), and the Association of Local Government Auditors.