



LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
DARYL G. PURPERA, CPA, CFE

March 30, 2016

The Honorable Eric Hatfield  
Caddo Parish Constable of Ward Eight  
10040 Loveland Court  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71106

Dear Constable Hatfield:

As you are aware, my Investigative Audit staff visited the Caddo Parish Constable of Ward Eight (Constable) to assess certain financial matters. This letter briefly summarizes the results of our work. We stress the importance of addressing these issues and encourage you to consider our recommendations as you work to resolve the following:

**Inaccurate Financial Statements Provided to the Legislative Auditor**

Louisiana Revised Statute (La. R.S.) 24:513 requires constables receiving less than \$200,000 in revenues during the course of a fiscal year to file a sworn financial statement and revenue certification each year with the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA).

We reviewed your office's financial statements for calendar years 2013 and 2014 and compared the amounts reported as income to the actual revenues received by your office. These records indicate that you did not report \$5,534 in revenues collected during this time period. This amount included \$3,234 in revenues received from "Deputy Contract Work" in 2013 and at least \$2,300 of "Fees Collected" from the Justice of the Peace during 2014. According to records obtained from your office, "Deputy Contract Work" included security patrols performed for a local homeowner's association, and "Fees Collected" included payments received from the Justice of the Peace Court for serving papers, including eviction notices.

We asked you why those revenues were not included on your office's financial statements. You had no explanation but stated that your secretary filled out the forms. By failing to report all of the revenues received by your office, you appear to have provided inaccurate financial statements to the LLA. Financial statements that do not accurately reflect the financial position of the Constable's office may hinder management and oversight of the Constable's operations.

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### **Constable Failed to Disclose All Income to the Louisiana Board of Ethics**

La. R.S. 42:1124.2 requires Louisiana elected officials representing a voting district with a population of 5,000 or more people to annually file a financial disclosure statement with the Louisiana Board of Ethics. The financial disclosure statement requires the elected official to disclose all personal income, business income, business ownership, property ownership, investments, and liabilities. The financial disclosure statements submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics must be notarized, and the elected official must certify that all information provided is true and correct.

We reviewed the financial disclosure statements submitted by you for 2012, 2013, and 2014. We determined that companies owned by you received \$292,975 from the Shreveport Housing Authority in 2012 and 2013 that was not recorded on the financial disclosure statements you submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics. We also determined that you received \$54,954 of income from Target Oilfield Services in 2012, which was not reported on the financial disclosure statements you submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics.

In addition, you also may have failed to report business ownership and holdings of immovable property on the financial disclosure statements you submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics. Louisiana Secretary of State records show that you are affiliated with 21 active Louisiana companies. We requested documentation of your business ownership interests but have received no documentation to date and, therefore, cannot verify whether the business ownership information recorded on your financial disclosure statements is complete. You only reported one property on the financial disclosure statements you submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics for 2012, 2013, and 2014. However, Caddo Parish Assessor records show 22 properties in your name or the name of your company, Hatfield Development Company. By providing incomplete and/or inaccurate information to the Louisiana Board of Ethics, you may have violated the reporting requirements of the Louisiana Board of Ethics and may be subject to the penalties provided in La. R.S. 42:1124.4.

### **Constable Failed to Provide Appropriate Insurance for Deputy Constables**

Between January 2012 and July 2015, you appointed approximately 31 deputy constables to perform the statutorily-defined responsibilities of your office including serving citations and enforcing garnishments and evictions.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in December 2012, you entered into an agreement with the Southern Trace Property Owners Association (Southern Trace) under which you and some of your deputy constables performed security patrols for the Southern Trace neighborhood. The patrols provided general security services including monitoring traffic, responding to resident complaints, and investigating suspicious circumstances (e.g., doors left

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<sup>1</sup> In August 2015, state legislation took effect limiting Caddo Parish Constables to one deputy constable each.

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open at residences). You billed Southern Trace for the patrols and paid the deputy constables performing the patrols an hourly rate of pay.

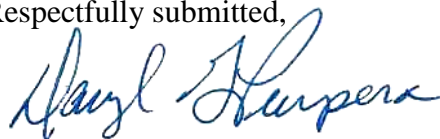
Under the provisions of Louisiana's Workers' Compensation Law, employers of political subdivisions must provide workers' compensation or other liability insurance to employees for potential work-related injuries arising out of the course of their employment. During our review, we determined that you did not provide workers' compensation or other liability insurance for your deputy constables despite the risks associated with the nature of their job responsibilities. You obtained insurance for yourself from the Professional Law Enforcement Association (PFLA) – a national law enforcement organization that provides legal defense protection. You stated that you informed your deputy constables that they could also obtain insurance from the PFLA but would have to pay for it with their own funds, as the Constable's office was unable to provide the insurance. You added that most of your deputy constables probably did not obtain insurance because most were unpaid volunteers.

By failing to secure workers' compensation or other liability insurance for your deputy constables, you may have subjected your office to lawsuits and the payment of legal damages in case of adverse judgments.

We recommend that you: (1) ensure that the financial transactions of your office are supported with comprehensive and accurate records; (2) amend the statements submitted to the LLA and the Louisiana Board of Ethics to ensure they are complete and accurate; (3) implement written policies and procedures to ensure that all records submitted to the LLA and the Louisiana Board of Ethics are genuine and accurate; and (4) secure workers compensation or other liability insurance for your current deputy constable in conformity with state law.

This correspondence represents our findings and recommendations, as well as your response. This correspondence is intended primarily for the information and use of management of the Caddo Parish Constable for Ward Eight. I trust this information will assist you in the efficient and effective operations of the Caddo Parish Constable for Ward Eight. Should you have any questions, please call Greg Clapinski or Gary Duty at (225) 339-3800.

Respectfully submitted,



Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE  
Legislative Auditor

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## APPENDIX A

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### Management's Response



----- Forwarded by Gary Duty/LLA on 03/24/2016 08:07 AM -----

From: Caddo Constable <caddoconstable@yahoo.com>  
To: Gary Duty <gduty@lla.la.gov>,  
Date: 03/23/2016 04:05 PM  
Subject: Ammended response

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Gary,

I was advised by Mr. Harris to amend response. My amended response is as follows.

I have never had any interaction with the Legislative Auditors or complaints until I publicly announced my candidacy for Sheriff of Caddo Parish. This investigation was very costly to taxpayers as it involved numerous trips by investigators back and forth from Baton Rouge to Shreveport simply to interview a Constable who receives \$300/month from the parish. Taxpayers paid for fuel, meals, and lodging in reference to the investigation.

In reference to findings or recommendations regarding Worker's Compensation insurance I would like to make the following statements.

The office of Constable receives \$300/month from the Caddo Parish Commission. The parish and/or state does not offer or provide any type of insurance to Constables or deputy Constables. To my knowledge there is not a Constable in the state of Louisiana that has Worker's Comp.

I do not nor did I have (31) deputy Constables - It's odd that the number of deputies ranged from 12-31 during the campaign. I am not aware of (31) deputies.

I had (1) one working volunteer deputy Constable. He is retired from the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office and his name is Jeff Shadoin and is post-certified.

I find it odd that the Sheriff's Office doesn't provide Worker's Compensation or any other insurance to their volunteer deputies yet it has now been recommended that deputy Constables should be provided with Worker's Compensation insurance.

As a result of these findings by legislative auditors it is safe to assume that all other auxiliary and reserve officers as well as any other "volunteer" public servant could be near extinction as our state cannot afford to provide Worker's Compensation for every volunteer throughout the state of Louisiana.

The statements contained within the findings contained in this legislative auditor report are falsely stated and not true. In reference to a failure to report income one should question the origin of the figures stated within the report in regards to income not reported. Obviously it was reported or the auditors would have had no other way of obtaining those figures.

In closing, please note that auditors advised me to simply ammend the report that was incomplete and my assistant did so within a couple of days of that recommendation. Therefore, all income was accurately reported. Both legislative auditors were courteous, professional, and kind during the investigation. I feel that the actual investigators were simply doing as they were instructed and that they were sympathetic to the way I was treated during my campaign for Sheriff.

Constable Eric Hatfield

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