

November 23, 2003

Larry Friedman  
P.O. Box 2487  
Stockton, Ca. 95201-2487

Dear Mr. Friedman,

My name is Charles M. Wideen and I am writing to you in regards to assistance that you and LDF (case # 01-1005) provided me in a legal dispute with the city of Fontana. In May of 2001 I was involved in a use of force incident that had been photographed by a local newspaper. As you could imagine, this started a chain reaction that ultimately changed my life forever. After a six month internal affairs investigation, the department determined that I had been untruthful with a supervisor and used excessive force which resulted in my termination after 13 years and a spotless record.

Shortly after the incidents occurred I obtained legal counsel from Dieter Dammeier from the law firm of Lackie and Dammeier with the assistance of LDF. It was obvious that my AB 301 rights had been violated when supervisors questioned me, but the department refused to admit their wrong doing. I can't tell you how important it was, at that point, to have an attorney such as Dieter, who has been a police officer and could relate to my frustrations in dealing with the department administration. Dieter's confidence and professionalism was a key element in helping me cope with this devastating event.

Dieter filed for a preliminary injunction in San Bernardino Superior Court, which was denied by a judge who had probably never heard of AB 301 and police officer rights. Needless to say, this decision was very devastating and the department thought they won. But because Dieter knew the judge was wrong with his decision, we forged ahead and went to the next step of obtaining a writ of mandate. This time we prevailed and the judge ruled the department supervisors violated my AB 301 rights. The judge ordered that my statements be removed from my personnel file, which eliminated the reason I was ultimately terminated.

The Chief of Police had all along indicated that if we prevailed, as we had done, I would be reinstated. But, because of an unknown political maneuver, the Chief reneged on his earlier statements and appealed the decision to the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals in Riverside. After another year of frustration and no income the Court of Appeals affirmed the lower courts decision and again reiterated the supervisors at Fontana Police Department violated my AB 301 rights. This decision motivated the Chief of Police to immediately reinstate me.

I have been back to work for a week now and am learning how this decision and my case have changed policy at Fontana Police Department. This all could not have been accomplished with out the support from LDF, Dieter Dammeier and Michael Morguess. So, from the bottom of my heart, my family and I would like to thank you and LDF for believing in Dieter and my case. Without a great organization as LDF, police officers would not have the rights they do today.

Sincerely, Charles M. Wideen

