



Date: August 15, 2006
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Councilwoman Laura Richardson, Sixth District *J for CLR*

Subject: **AGENDA ITEM: REQUEST FOR REPORT REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF COORDINATING THE 911 DISPATCH SYSTEM WITH STATE OF THE ART TELEPHONE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES**

Background

Over the last several years, the City of Long Beach has explored utilizing various options of "public" telephone services such as when I brought forward 311. More recently in March 2005 based on the request of Councilman O'Donnell city staff reported on the feasibility of relieving congestion on the 911 system by establishing 311 for non-emergency calls. The reassessment and re-examination of the existing 911 system was requested in response to new technologies and increasing demands for service. As service needs and technology evolve, it often becomes necessary to re-examine and revisit emergency service capabilities.

Telephone subscription services such as Echo 911 can provide potentially life saving services and information to subscribers and emergency service personnel. The Echo 911 service operates by immediately notifying friends, families and neighbors anytime a 911 call is placed from a subscriber's home telephone.

Recently in Detroit, there was the tragedy of a 911 dispatcher confusing a child's emergency service call with a prank possibly contributing to the death of the child's mother. Given the facts that in Long Beach there are approximately 55,000 residents aged sixty and older, 80,000 youth ages 9 and younger and that our city is widely diverse in terms of age and ethnicity, it is imperative that the city explores and implements all methods and possible mechanisms to prevent similar incidents.

While 311 serves as an option to better utilize city services, the Echo 911 service is intended to enhance the emergency services for our residents and businesses. Echo 911 is a service that individuals may purchase directly from their local telephone service provider for a monthly fee. The City's emergency dispatch system should be capable of interacting with Echo 911 and similar subscription-based services.

Proposed Action

I am requesting that within sixty days the City Manager prepare a report for the City Council addressing the possibility of coordinating City's 911 system with subscriber services such as Echo 911.