



*Remarks of District Attorney Jackie Lacey
Hall of Justice Time Capsule Placement Ceremony
July 7, 2016*

Good morning.

This is a great day to remember the past, appreciate the present and contemplate the future. This building is such a glorious landmark. The District Attorney's Office moved back here a little more than a year ago, and it has been wonderful place to work.

Entering the Hall of Justice each day is a reminder that we are part of something bigger. Our colleagues who preceded us fought for justice and enforced the rule of law. We here today are trying to follow their lead but also do more.

We want to make the criminal justice system better for the people we serve and for those who will be here decades from now to open this time capsule. We, in the legal profession, tend to get caught up in the past. We look to "precedents" in court rulings to guide us. Someone once quipped that the law exercises foresight through a rearview mirror.

So, it's refreshing for me to talk about the future. What will it be like when this time capsule is opened? What will it be like 50 or 100 years from now?

Law enforcement certainly will look different. Developments in surveillance, biometrics, DNA analysis and microchips will enhance crime prevention and crime solving. Intelligence databases – and the ability to quickly share information – will no doubt help us keep the public safe.

But what about how we prosecute cases? Will we be employing algorithms to determine the validity of evidence and witnesses? What will be different for judges? Will trials and hearings be conducted through a future form of teleconferencing? We already do that a bit in arraignments. Will jury service merely require logging in on a device from home?

These are questions that I cannot help but consider as we stow away these few items in the time capsule, and seal it up in this historic building. I included a few items in the time capsule that I hope show future generations that we were working to address the world we lived in – with an eye toward the future.

My contributions include a brief note, a challenge coin, an organizational chart of the District Attorney’s Office and a biennial report from 2013-2014. What will they make of these things?

I hope they examine the organizational chart and realize – that while this office dedicated tremendous resources to stopping gang crime and prosecuting violent criminals – there also was great attention given a breed of criminal that utilized what we considered high technology.

No doubt, what we consider high technology today will be laughed at in the future – like we chuckle at those old lunchbox-sized mobile phones. I hope they read the biennial report included in the time capsule and know that we were at the vanguard of a transformation in the criminal justice system.

I hope they take note of how we worked to address people with mental illness. I hope they see that even prosecutors and law enforcement in 2016 recognized that we could make our communities safer if certain nonviolent offenders were afforded alternative sentencing courts – getting them the assistance they need and making more prison space available for violent criminals.

The challenge coin that I included states: “Fighting for Justice.” It truly is my hope that when this time capsule is opened, that our generation’s efforts – Fighting for Justice – have paid off. That this county and the criminal justice system are better.

Better – but, it is probably too much to ask that they’ll be perfect.

So, finally, I hope those who open this time capsule recognize that Fighting for Justice is always a good fight. It is for all of us. It will be for them – and the future ahead of them.

Thank you very much.



Jackie Lacey
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