

April 5, 2011

To: Board of Supervisors, CAO, County Counsel, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors,
and Director of Transportation

My name is Aradhana Kochar. I am a Senior Civil Engineer in the Construction Division.

I am the Structures Representative on the Missouri Flat Phase 1B project. I am directly responsible for \$14 million dollars of work on the \$23.8 million dollar construction contract. A few of my duties as Structures Representative on this project include inspecting all structures work and performing engineering analyses of falsework, shoring, column guying systems, and other critical submittals. These temporary engineered systems, if they fail, can be catastrophic. The technical expertise required to manage a steel girder bridge project in excess of 100-feet above Weber Creek with four lanes of freeway traffic is without comparison to other important engineering functions at the County.

I am also one of the persons for whom the deviation from retention points has been requested. Deviation from retention points has been the subject of many conversations over the past several weeks. You've heard my colleagues stand before you and speak out against the deviation. You've heard my union speak out against the deviation, even though it is included in the current Memorandum of Understanding. In most of this, I have been reduced to words on paper. So, now I stand before you, alone, defending this request, to show you the person behind the rhetoric.

I have worked for this County, in the Construction Division, for almost eight years. Eight years of working long hours in the office, in the field, in the heat, in the cold, at night, on weekends. Eight years of working with contractors, fighting with contractors, resolving conflicts, negotiating changes to the work, ensuring public safety, using engineering judgment to achieve project compliance. Eight years of communicating with the general public and local and state agencies. During this time, I have come to understand the County's viewpoint on liability in construction, doing everything possible to minimize risk, all the while promoting the County's best interests.

Over these years, FHWA has completed four audits on my construction projects and the State has also completed four separate audits. My effective management of these projects has ensured reimbursement of monies to the County and I learned last year that FHWA uses copies of my field documentation from the Dry Creek Bridge Replacement project to train other local agencies on how to properly administer transportation projects with federal monies.

I have successfully helped to administer some of the County's highest profile capital improvement projects. Two of these projects - the Mosquito Road Hazard Mitigation project and the Missouri Flat Phase 1A project won APWA awards.

Aradhana Kochar
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26 A. Kochar 4-5-11

I take great pride in the work I have done for the County. Three weeks ago I heard the Board speak about the need to keep the "do-ers." I am a "do-er." I have worked hard for this County. I have worked hard to become a Senior Civil Engineer, and I deserve to remain one. Replacing me with another Senior Civil Engineer now, who is not familiar with the complexity of the Phase 1B project, would only expose the County to unnecessary liability and increased risk.

It isn't the length of experience, it's the quality of the experience that supports the story.

Thank you for your time.