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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: December 14, 2023

INITIATION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO “DRAG QUEEN STORY HOUR” PROTEST AT SAN FERNANDO COUNTY LIBRARY

SAN FERNANDO, CA – The City of San Fernando and the San Fernando Police Department (SFPD) recognize the importance of maintaining the trust and confidence of the public. Defending and upholding the values of civility, tolerance, inclusivity and accountability is critical to this objective.

On Wednesday, October 25, 2023, a group of protestors assembled outside and around the Los Angeles County Library in San Fernando to express their opposition to a County organized "Drag Queen Story Hour" program hosted at the San Fernando County Library. A number of people supportive of the program also assembled in response to the protest. While there was a police presence for the event, additional officers were called in to protect event participants and restore order in response to provocations by some of the protesters.

On the day of the event, SFPD's main objective was to protect public safety and prevent all present from suffering physical harm. That said, the City intends to hold attendees who engaged in criminal conduct accountable and will diligently pursue their prosecution. While the City recognizes everyone's right to free speech regardless of its content, criminal conduct under the guise of free speech will not be tolerated.

SFPD has initiated at least two separate criminal investigations into allegations of criminal conduct at the event. The specific details of these investigations cannot be disclosed at this time, but if any member of the public has information that

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may be pertinent to the investigations, please contact Detective Vivian Raygoza at (818) 898-1260, or vraygoza@sfcity.org, as soon as possible. When the investigations are completed, the cases will be evaluated to determine if there is sufficient evidence to present the cases to the Los Angeles District Attorney for criminal prosecution.

In the interest of transparency, we will provide updates as appropriate throughout this process. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work towards maintaining a safe and inclusive community for all.

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