

Jury Awards Former MTA Treasurer \$837,040; Counsel to Pursue New Trial, Possible Appeal

(September 29) A Los Angeles Superior Court jury, Tuesday, awarded a former MTA treasurer \$837,040 in a wrongful termination suit against the MTA.

Assistant County Counsel Steve Carnevale, in a memo to the MTA Board, said the award to Leslie Porter appears to be excessive. He said his office "will pursue a motion for a new trial and will examine the possibility of filing an appeal."

The judge earlier had dismissed racial discrimination and other claims filed by Porter, who was employed first by the LACTC and then by the MTA from April, 1990, to December, 1996. Porter's original lawsuit sought \$2 million from the agency.

Porter was fired by the MTA when it was determined he had failed to make payments on his home mortgage. The mortgage had been purchased through a shared equity agreement with the LACTC.

Meanwhile, a judge in another Superior Court lawsuit brought by a former MTA manager has found in favor of the MTA on a racial discrimination charge against the agency. The judge earlier had reduced a \$5.7 million jury award to \$1.67 million in a suit brought by Alfred Boctor. County Counsel is planning an appeal of the reduced award.

Boctor had been disciplined in 1991 following sexual harassment charges filed against him by female employees. In 1996, the California Court of Appeal found that he had "sexually harassed subordinate employees...."

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