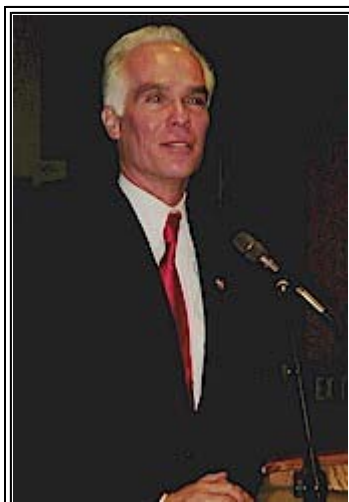


Keep Kids in School to Keep Crime Down, Garcetti Says in Vendor Appreciation Day Talk



LA County District Attorney Gil Garcetti addressed MTA Vendor Appreciation Day.

(Jan. 12) Crime nationwide may be down for the moment, LA County District Attorney Gil Garcetti told MTA transit pass vendors attending an Appreciation Day at Headquarters, but the number of teenagers - the age group most responsible for crime - is increasing.

Garcetti was keynote speaker for the "Super Service 2000" event sponsored by MTA Marketing. A dozen pass and token vendors earned 15-year or 20-year service awards. Continental Currency Services, Inc., with some 50 locations in LA County, was named Number One Top Seller.

20 percent increase by 2005

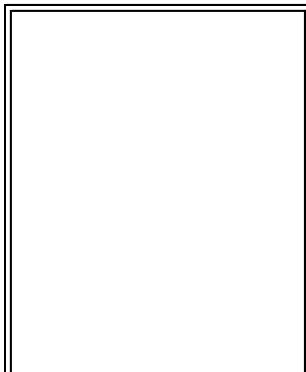
During his speech, the district attorney said the United States will see a 20 percent increase in youngsters ages 14 to 19 by 2005 and a 30 percent increase by 2010.

He challenged members of his audience to work to keep kids in school. Statistics indicate, he said, that 78 percent of those in prison are school dropouts.

"If a kid can't read and write; if he or she isn't computer-literate, what decent job opportunities will they have?" Garcetti asked. "Ask yourself, 'what can we do to keep kids in school?' That is *the key* to keeping crime down."

Other crime factors

Garcetti, who was elected district attorney in 1992, cited several other factors he said have reduced crime in LA County. These include court injunctions against gang members, the "three-strikes" law that can send repeat criminals to jail for life and the "10-20-life" law that escalates prison sentences for the threat or use of a gun during the commission of a crime.



During Appreciation Day ceremonies, Warren Morse, deputy executive officer, Marketing, honored the MTA's transit pass and token sales vendors.

Six vendors earned 20-year service award certificates. They are Alamar Travel, Continental Currency Services, Inc., Popular Cash Express, City Check Cashiers, California Quik Check and Nick's Check Cashing.



Warren Morse of MTA Marketing welcomes vendors to the MTA.

Six others earned 15-year service awards. They are Ralphs Grocery Co., City of El Monte, Farmacia Professional, Top Town, Inc., Digital Currency Services, Inc., and City of West Hollywood.

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