



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT**

September 24, 2013

Honorable Kamala Harris
Attorney General
State of California
1100 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Attorney General Harris:

Thank you for your role in representing the Governor and the State of California before the federal three-judge panel that is overseeing the court order to reduce the state prison population by approximately 9,000 inmates by December 31, 2013. Whether the court grants the extension for which you are advocating, the County of Los Angeles (County) has a vested interest in ensuring that the prison pipeline is truncated. We are writing to request your assistance in helping local government and law enforcement agencies in responding to efforts to address jail inmate management and overcrowding, post release supervision, recidivism, rehabilitation and public safety.

We agree with the Governor and legislative leadership's efforts to delay the decision to reduce the inmate population and allocate more resources in support of drug, mental health and other rehabilitation programs as contemplated in Senate Bill 105, the Governor's Prison Population Reduction Plan. The measure appropriately recognizes the direct correlation between robust rehabilitation programs and a decrease in recidivism. The County is benefited by greater emphasis on rehabilitation than incarceration and expenditure of scarce public dollars to private prisons as a solution to the state's excess prison population.

As amended on September 9, 2013, the measure directs the state to work with stakeholders over the next year to seek longer-term solutions to reduce recidivism and the prison population. Our support for this approach is motivated by the County's experience in implementing the Governor's October 2011 Public Safety Realignment effort as enacted by Assembly Bill 109. This measure caused the shift of prison parolee population oversight and incarceration of those convicted whose last offense was non-violent, non-serious, and non-sexual ("N3") from the State of California to local county governments. Aside from the public safety dimensions of this dramatic change in the role of government at the state and county levels, this shift has revealed some troubling shortcomings in the County's capacity to effectively measure and evaluate the impact we are having on recidivism and rehabilitation. The final decision, however, on whether the state can move forward with the compromise rests with the federal court. Hopefully, the court will recognize that any solutions coming forward must include ways of addressing the challenges the County is already experiencing and ensure adequate funding before the County takes on further responsibilities.

Last week, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion that supports the Governor's Prison Population Reduction Plan. Additionally, the motion directs County Counsel to file appropriate briefs in federal court that articulate the County's support of the compromise and seek to obtain additional time to address the vexing and expensive challenges associated with prison overcrowding. (Please see attached.)

Through the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC), the Board of Supervisors has engaged our criminal justice partners (i.e., the courts, law enforcement agencies, the district attorney, the public defender, the alternate public defender, local school districts, and the County's probation, health services, public health and mental health departments) in a collaborative effort to develop a common definition of recidivism.

This discussion has been useful in highlighting the County's consciousness of the need for more comprehensive analysis of programmatic efforts designed to address this vexing challenge. Many of those engaged in these discussions were surprised to learn that there is no commonly held, statewide definition of recidivism, within the criminal justice community, the absence of which compromises our ability to evaluate the effectiveness of current policies and programs designed to address the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals following release from custody and supervision. The lack of a universally accepted definition also impairs our ability to quantify challenges we are encountering with the 2011 Realignment, and it would impair our ability to design an effective response to the additional public safety responsibilities we are anticipating, regardless of the court's decision.

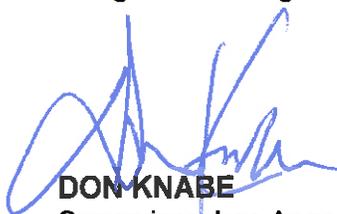
The County of Los Angeles and State of California, more generally, need an entity within state government that can perform comparative research and analysis, catalog best practices and provide technical assistance to local governments capable of informing public policy formulation and investment in programs aimed at rehabilitation, treatment and community re-entry of the formerly incarcerated.

We are writing to you to request that the Office of the Attorney General initiate a statewide effort to conduct the aforementioned research and analysis and serve as a clearinghouse for the best practices it reviews around the state that can assist local governments and law enforcement agencies in responding to efforts to address jail overcrowding and management, recidivism, rehabilitation and public safety.

With hope,



MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Chairman of the Board
Supervisor, Los Angeles County 2nd District



DON KNABE
Supervisor, Los Angeles County
4th District

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
AND DON KNABE**

SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

County of Los Angeles Supports State Prison Population Reduction Compromise

Given the implementation of AB109 in October 2011 which caused the shifting of the prison parolee population oversight and the incarceration of those convicted whose last offense was non-violent, non-serious, and non-sexual ("N3") from the State of California to local county government, the County of Los Angeles has a vested interest in ensuring that the prison pipeline is truncated.

To this end, the County of Los Angeles supports the compromise reached by Governor Jerry Brown and the four legislative leaders to reduce the state's prison population. The compromise quite appropriately recognizes the direct correlation between robust rehabilitation programs and a decrease in recidivism. The compromise allocates more fiscal resources in support of drug, mental health and other rehabilitation programs rather than spend \$315 million to lease cells in private prisons and available county jails.

The County of Los Angeles is benefited by a shift to rehabilitate rather than send scarce public dollars to private prisons as a solution to reduce the state's prison population. The final decision, however, on whether the state can move forward with the compromise rests with a Federal three-judge panel who is overseeing the court order to reduce the state prison population by approximately 9,000 inmates by December 31, 2013. Any solutions coming forward must include ways of addressing the challenges the County is already experiencing and ensure adequate funding before the County takes on further responsibilities.

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Support the Governor and four legislative leaders' compromise plan and that County Counsel file appropriate briefs in federal court that articulate the County's support of the compromise.

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MOLINA _____
YAROSLAVSKY _____
KNABE _____
ANTONOVICH _____
RIDLEY-THOMAS _____