



Can Realignment Set Us Straight? California begins historic shift of incarceration, supervision, and parole back to the counties

The State of California has embarked on a bold and ambitious shift in criminal justice policy thanks to legislation enacted earlier this year. Under AB 109, which took effect October 1, most persons convicted of nonviolent, non-serious and non-sex offenses (commonly referred to as the “non, non, nons”) will become a local responsibility.

This effort to **realign** custody and post-release supervision of many of those convicted of crimes – from the *state* to the *counties* – has the potential to be the most important change in criminal justice in decades.

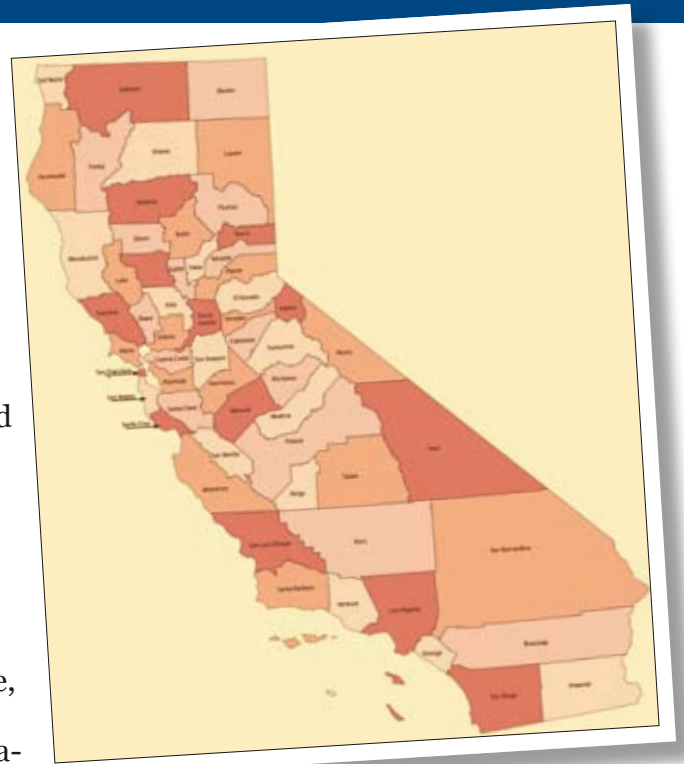
Counties responsible for those convicted, paroled or released

While the length of sentences does not change, judges will have the option of sentencing people convicted of these offenses to incarceration in a local jail or to an alternative sanction (such as home detention and electronic monitoring, residential treatment beds, substance abuse treatment), or a combination of the two.

Counties will also assume responsibility for the post-release supervision for people whose current conviction is for a “non, non, non,” and persons who violate the terms of their parole will no longer be sent back to prison.

Long overdue reform prompted by federal court order

The impetus for realignment comes from a federal court order requiring California to reduce its prison population, the state’s bud-



etary woes, and the belief that, given the proper resources, local governments can achieve better outcomes. California prisons have a 70 percent recidivism rate, the highest in the nation, and spending for corrections now exceeds that of the University of California and California State University systems combined. The Legislature’s recognition that incarceration in state prison is not the answer for everyone convicted of a felony is long overdue and hardly radical, but is nevertheless a positive development.

(Continued on next page)

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“The Friends Committee on Legislation of California (FCLCA), guided by Quaker values, advocates for California state laws that are just, compassionate and respectful of the inherent worth of every person.”

Critics cite public safety and funding concerns

That realigning public safety has its naysayers would be an understatement – expressions of fear and dire predictions have been emanating from Sacramento ever since Governor Brown proposed shifting responsibility for the “non, non, nons” in his January 2011 budget proposal.

The Assembly Republican Caucus recently produced a video that features Assembly Member Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) characterizing realignment as the dumping of state prisoners and parolees into our local communities, “...a mass population of un-rehabilitated felons.” In addition to noting that the State has never kept its promises of funding to local governments, Nielsen, a former chair of the Board of Prison Terms, warns that “every citizen should be preoccupied with their personal safety...” and implores the public to take extra security precautions.

False dichotomy of tough/soft on crime leads to California’s crisis

The video demonstrates just about everything that is wrong with criminal justice policy-making in California and elsewhere. The hyperbole results in a paralyzing false dichotomy where political positions are considered either tough on crime or soft on crime, leaving no room for policymakers to be *smart* on crime.

The resulting political paralysis is arguably the root cause of the prison overcrowding crisis. Despite two decades of volu-

minous reports by various commissions, think tanks and expert panels – all of which have recommended the implementation of alternatives to incarceration – the Legislature has continually looked the other way.

Years of sentencing enhancements crowd prisons beyond capacity

Not surprisingly, the prison population grew exponentially while funding for rehabilitation programs lagged, and voters rejected bond measures for new prison construction.

Lawmakers have found it relatively easy to advance their political careers by routinely passing ad hoc sentencing enhancements and creating new felonies in response to the latest sensational crime. Typically these bills were passed without considering the impact on the state’s prison capacity or the state’s budget. As a result the prison population soared to 195 percent of capacity.

And while the voters have ratified ballot measures to lengthen prison sentences for serious and violent crimes, in 2000 they also sent a clear signal that a prison term is not always the answer with the passage of Proposition 36, which requires sentencing courts to offer drug treatment in lieu of incarceration.

Realignment may satisfy court-ordered reductions

In recent years, the Senate Public

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Safety Committee implemented an informal policy to hold bills, with few exceptions, that would increase the prison population. So, while the Legislature has been determined to keep prison overcrowding from getting worse, until the passage of realignment it has been unable to take steps to make significant reductions in the prison population.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a District Court's 2010 order requiring the State to reduce its prison population to 137.5 percent of capacity, a reduction of some 34,000 prisoners. When fully implemented, realignment should come close to satisfying the court order.

Responding to realignment's critics

While it is true that the ongoing tug-of-war between the State and local governments has resulted in local governments getting the short end of the stick, it is worth noting that the Republicans refused to give Governor Brown any votes for his proposal to extend some temporary tax increases in order to fund realignment and to give local governments constitutional protection against future funding "raids" by Sacramento.

It is also true that the Legislature has made deep cuts to prison rehabilitation programs the last two years as a result of the recession.

It is a stretch to say that this population is being dumped on local communities. Aside from the obvious fact that state prisoners *come* from local communities and the fact that 95 percent of them come back to their local communities anyway, if anything the opposite has been true.

Counties have had a fiscal incentive to send people convicted of felonies to state prison, meaning the State – not local government – picks up the entire costs of incarceration, now estimated by the Legislative Analyst's Office in excess of \$50,000 per year per individual.

A few years ago the Legislature addressed this fiscal incentive when passing SB 678 by Mark Leno (D-San Francisco). Jump-started with federal stimulus funds, the legislation allows counties to share in the reduced incarceration costs borne by the State by reducing the number of probation failures that result in a state prison term. Then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the bill, and early indications are that it is reducing the number of prison commitments.

Alternatives to realignment – like early release – gain no traction

Moreover, opponents of realignment have failed to offer an alternative solution. Without realignment or an alternative plan in place, it is conceivable that the State would have to release prisoners early in order to comply with the District Court order. While there are thousands of prisoners incarcerated in California – including many serving life sentences – who pose no risk to public safety, "early release" has gained no political traction in the Legislature.

A few years ago, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency surveyed early release programs in other states and concluded that if done carefully, shaving short times off of prison sentences did not result in increased crime rates. Efforts to shorten prison sentences even by

very small amounts remain a non-starter in the halls of Sacramento.

Counties now responsible for post-release supervision and parolees

Effective October 1, 2011, counties have also assumed responsibility for the post-release supervision of the "non, non, nons," and parolees will no longer be sent back to prison for violating the terms of their parole.

The current practice of sending parole violators back to prison for an average four-and-a-half-month stay in a reception center – last year 47,000 of whom served 90 days or less – where they are assessed and released before they can obtain any programming, merely ties up prison beds.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) plans to convert several reception centers into level three prison beds. While CDCR will not meet its court-ordered population reduction for this year, the department claims it will be able to meet the Court's June 2012 benchmark.

Counties given wide discretion and power to implement reforms

Passing realignment was no small political accomplishment. In order to line up enough votes, the legislation gives local governments wide discretion in determining how realignment is implemented. Proponents of realignment claim that the bill creates a fiscal incentive for local governments to make less use of incarceration and more use of alternatives because, in the aggregate, the funds provided to counties are insufficient for counties to jail everyone who will become a

(Continued on next page)

local responsibility. On the other hand, caseload increases as the result of realignment may ease resistance to adding new jail beds. One thing is certain: the Legislature's "hands off" policy will result in considerable variation from county to county.

Now that the responsibility for persons convicted of low-level offenses shifts to local governments, can we expect local players to be good stewards of public funds and to abandon a reflexive reliance on mass incarceration?

San Francisco and Santa Cruz lead the way in alternatives to incarceration

To illustrate, San Francisco and Santa Cruz counties do not plan to add additional jail beds and will use realignment dollars received from the State to make more use of alternatives to incarceration.

Los Angeles County plans to spend \$1.4 billion to renovate two jails and add 400 new jail beds. In Sacramento County, the Board of Supervisors approved a plan to spend \$6 million of the \$13 million it will receive from the state to re-open 275 previously shuttered jail beds.

Approximately 25 local jails are under court-ordered population caps, and in 2007 the Legislature enacted AB 900, which provides proceeds from the sale of lease-revenue bonds to provide

for prison and jail bed construction. However, the expensive operational costs of additional jail beds will reduce funds available for programs that work. At a time when California is making additional cuts to the safety net, public education and state universities, does it make sense for counties to increase spending for mass incarceration?

Implementation of realignment faces obstacles from some district attorneys

In Los Angeles County, District Attorney Steve Cooley has characterized realignment as a "public safety nightmare" that will increase crime. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Cooley is training his attorneys to "scour criminal records" in order to capture prior offenses when filing new charges and to be certain that new charges include serious, violent or sex offenses whenever possible in order to result in a prison term ("Prison plan sways prosecutors in filing charges," November 20, 2011). Given the large number of state prison commitments emanating from Los Angeles County, Cooley's efforts could significantly impede realignment. Moreover, district attorneys carry a lot of weight at the local level and in the State Capitol.

Fiscal uncertainty may threaten realignment

Fiscal uncertainty is another potential drawback. In order to guarantee that counties will continue to receive funding for their new responsibilities, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) will seek a constitutional amendment to guarantee funding from

existing funding sources. As part of their negotiations with the governor, counties agreed to drop all claims that realignment is an unfunded mandate in exchange for the constitutional protection. The governor, however, was unable to obtain such guarantees.

Governor Brown has also indicated an effort to temporarily increase taxes at the ballot, with a half-cent sales tax increase dedicated solely to funding realignment.

Moment of truth approaches: will realignment lead to real results?

In essence, realignment calls on local governments to succeed where the state has failed. California's unusually high recidivism rate provides ample evidence that reliance on punishment does not address the root causes of criminal behavior. Now that the responsibility for persons convicted of low-level offenses shifts to local governments, can we expect local players to be good stewards of public funds and to abandon a reflexive reliance on mass incarceration? Anything short of this will reduce realignment to a rearrangement of the deck chairs on the Titanic. In order for realignment to succeed, county sheriffs, chief probation officers, local district attorneys and superior court judges must embrace qualitative change. Promoting public safety and fiscal accountability demands nothing less. **FCLCA**

– Jim Lindburg
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Your Quick Guide to Realignment

Beginning October 1, 2011 counties assumed responsibility for managing most persons convicted of nonviolent, non-serious and non-sex offenses.

- Those serving prison sentences for these offenses prior to October 1 will continue to serve their sentences in state prison.
- Under realignment, the length of sentences does not change with county supervision; however, judges will be able to consider jail time, another sentencing option, or a combination of the jail time and a sentencing option.
- Counties will have enhanced authority to make use of alternative custody tools including home detention and electronic monitoring. These options will also be available for those being held in jail in lieu of bail. County prisoners will receive two days of credit towards their sentence for every four days of good behavior, the same as for state prisoners.

Counties are now responsible for the post-release supervision of prisoners whose current commitment is for a nonviolent, non-serious and non-sex offense.

- County supervisors will designate a county agency, i.e., probation or sheriff, to be responsible for post-release supervision. Persons convicted of a “third strike” or a violent, serious or high-risk offense (as defined by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) will continue to be supervised by state parole agents upon release from state prison.
- The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation will have no jurisdiction over anyone who is under post-release community supervision and no person whose post-release supervision is revoked shall be returned to prison except for persons previously sentenced to a life term and only upon a court order.
- Courts will now have the authority for determining revocations of prisoners under state parole supervision. The Board of Parole Hearings will continue to conduct “lifer” hearings, medical parole, and hearing for prisoners deemed “mentally disordered offenders” and “sexually violent predators.”
- State parole agents will continue to have jurisdiction over all persons on state parole prior to implementation. Low level offenders remaining on state parole after the implementation of realignment may be discharged after six months if no violations occur.

Each county’s Community Corrections Partnership will create an Executive Committee to devise an implementation plan for realignment.

The Executive Committee will include the county’s chief probation officer, the chief of police, the county sheriff, the district attorney, the public defender, a presiding judge or designee of the superior court, and a representative from either the county Department of Social Services, Mental Health, or Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programs.

In this season of hope

We’d like to thank all those who gave us hope during the year for a more just and compassionate California

To all the Friends Meetings and Churches who support FCLCA

To all the activists who lend their voice of conscience and together make us strong

To all our donors and volunteers who make this work possible

To all those who read our newsletter behind bars

May you find peace and joy this holiday season and in the coming New Year.



Dark Days Ahead for California's Students, Families and Seniors

Mid-year budget cuts loom as tax revenues lag



The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) estimates that state tax collections will fall \$3.7 billion short of the optimistic revenue projections that were used to help close the gap between revenues and expenditures in the current fiscal year.

Additional cuts of at least \$600 million expected

As part of the 2011-2012 budget agreement, the governor will make additional spending cuts to K-12 education, higher education and health and human services depending on the level of the shortfall based on the LAO forecast and the forecast from the Department of Finance, which is due December 15. Using the numbers forecast by the LAO, the state will have to make \$2 billion in mid-year spending reductions. The Department of Finance will use whichever forecast will result in fewer cuts, but it is near certainty that at bare minimum reductions of \$600 million will be made.

This figure includes additional cuts to the Department of Developmental Services, In-Home Supportive Services, childcare, the University of California and the California State University System. Community college students will see increased fees. If the forecast by the Department of Finance mirrors the LAO's projections, additional cuts will be made, including up to \$1.5 billion from public education.

The mid-year spending cuts will be triggered without a clear indication of how state revenue collections will fare for the entire budget year after the state begins processing income tax returns in May. Historically, December, January, April and June are the biggest months for tax receipts.

Slow economic recovery faulted for \$13 billion budget shortfall

The LAO also estimates a \$13 billion budget shortfall through the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The shortfall is attributed to a slower than anticipated economic recovery with stubbornly high levels of unemployment, a weak housing market, the end of the federal stimulus program and declining public sector employment, as well as increased expenditures.

State required to "pay up" on its debts to local governments and schools

The state has to repay \$2 billion it borrowed from local governments in 2009. The state



MID-YEAR BUDGET CUTS

FROM BAD

If the Director of Finance estimates that revenues for the year will be less than \$87,452,500,000, but at least \$86,452,500,000, the following reductions totaling \$600 million will be made:

- \$100 million from the University of California;
- \$100 million from the California State University;
- \$100 million from the Department of Developmental Services;
- \$100 million by reducing hours in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program;
- \$72 million from the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) by collecting additional “sliding scale” fees paid by counties that commit youths to DJJ facilities;
- \$30 million from California Community Colleges (CCC) and increasing student fees by \$10 per unit, from \$36 per unit to \$46 per unit, beginning in the winter term of the 2011-12 academic year;
- \$23 million from child care programs administered by the California Department of Education;
- \$20 million from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation;
- \$16 million from the California State Library for library grants;
- \$15 million by extending various Medi-Cal managed care reductions approved in March to the Program of All-Inclusive Care of the Elderly (PACE), the Senior Care Action Network, and the AIDS HealthCare Foundation;
- \$15 million by reducing “vertical prosecution grants” administered by the California Emergency Management Agency, which provide local prosecutors with funding for specialized prosecution teams; and \$10 million by reducing funding for IHSS anti-fraud grants.

TO WORSE

If the Director of Finance estimates that revenues will be less than \$86,452,500,000, the following reductions totaling approximately \$1.9 billion will be made in addition to the reductions described above:

- \$1.5 billion from K-12 education. Legislation included in the June 28 budget agreement would allow school districts to reduce the 2011-12 school year by up to seven days in order to achieve this mid-year reduction.
- \$248 million by eliminating funding for home-to-school transportation.
- \$72 million by reducing CCC apportionments.

Source: California Budget Project

could also owe public education as much as \$6 billion for Proposition 98 costs and “settle-up” payments resulting from suspensions to Proposition 98 in previous years in order to help balance the state’s budget. Under Proposition 98, which was passed by voters in 1988, public schools and community colleges are guaranteed roughly 40 percent of all General Fund revenue collections. The Legislature may suspend Proposition 98, but is required to repay the funds that schools would have received without the suspension.

Brown fails to get Republican votes for tax increases – will go directly to voters

In his current year budget proposal, Governor Brown sought to extend temporary tax increases agreed to in

2009 for another five years, subject to voter approval, but was unable to secure any of the four Republican votes necessary under the California Constitution’s two-thirds super-majority requirement to increase taxes. The governor has announced plans to put an initiative on the November 2012 ballot that would raise \$7 billion annually by imposing higher income taxes on the top brackets and a half-cent increase in the sales tax rate. Rather than going through the Legislature, this time the governor will go directly to the voters. The new revenues would be dedicated to education and the realignment of public safety programs to the counties. [FCLCA](#)

– Jim Lindburg
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The Legislative Year in Review What did Jerry Brown sign?

The California Legislature adjourned the first year of its current two-year session on September 9, 2011 and reconvenes on January 4, 2012.

The good news is that most of the bills that FCLCA opposed did not make it to the governor's desk.

Let's take a look at several key bills FCLCA supported that the legislature did pass on to the governor and see what he signed and what he vetoed.

The **governor signed AB 420** by Mike Davis (D-Los Angeles), **an FCLCA priority bill** that requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to provide the Citizens Redistricting Commission with the last known address of prisoners so that they can be counted in their home districts for redistricting purposes. Currently prisoners are counted in the district where they are incarcerated.

FCLCA provided key testimony in support of AB 420 at committee hearings and in press conferences. FCLCA activists sent 136 emails and letters through our Action Alert center to legislators and the governor in support of the bill.

Governor Brown vetoed AB 568 by Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), which prohibits CDCR from shackling female prisoners who are pregnant.

FCLCA's Action Center generated 94 actions to the governor in support of the bill.

The governor signed SB 687 by Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) to restrict the use of uncorroborated testimony by jailhouse informants in criminal cases. The use of "jailhouse snitch" testimony has been identified as a leading cause of wrongful convictions. This bill was sponsored by the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice, which was created by former senator and long-time friend of FCLCA, John Burton, to examine the cause of wrongful convictions.

FCLCA monitored the commission's work and testified at commission hearings. For years, FCLCA vigorously supported previous versions of the bill which were then vetoed by former Governor Schwarzenegger.

Governor Brown signed AB 131 by Gil Cedillo (D-Los Angeles). The legislation makes undocumented students who have attended a California high school for three years or who have graduated from a California high school eligible to receive financial aid provided that they are applying for legal immigration status. He also signed AB 130, by Gil Cedillo, which exempts undocumented students from paying non-resident tuition.

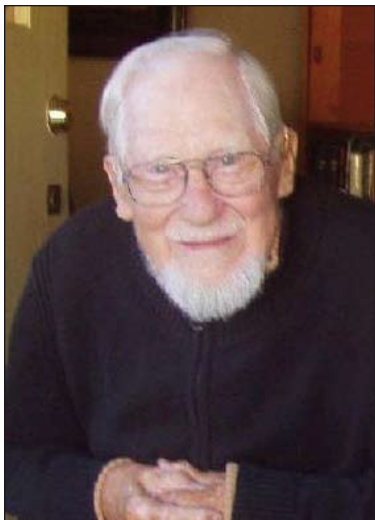
FCLCA activists generated 70 emails and letters to the governor in support of the bill.

The governor signed AB 353, also by Gil Cedillo, to prohibit the impounding of a vehicle if the driver's only offense is the failure to have a California Driver's License when stopped at a sobriety checkpoint. Police will now be required to make a reasonable attempt to release the vehicle to its registered owner or a licensed driver authorized by the owner.

Gov. Brown vetoed AB 1389 by Michael Allen (D-Santa Rosa) which was supported by FCLCA and would codify case law concerning sobriety checkpoints. Among other things, the bill would have required that checkpoints be conducted in locations with high incidences of DUI-related incidents or arrests. In his veto message, Governor Brown said that the bill is too restrictive to local law enforcement.

FCLCA's letter of support was highlighted in the Senate Public Safety Committee's analysis of the bill and FCLCA activists generated 94 letters in support to the governor.

(Continued on back page)



Ernest Bicknell, 1912-2011

It is with sorrow, love, and deep appreciation that FCLCA marks the passing of our dear Friend Ernest Bicknell. “Bick,” as those of us in Northern California knew him, was a long-time pacifist and a dedicated member of Berkeley Friends Meeting.

Bick became an active FCLCA supporter with his wife Eda in 1984, a commitment that continued after Eda’s death in 2002. He served as Clerk of FCLCA in the late 1980’s.

Friend Bick gave many of us the pleasure of his company, making light work of any task. In his way, every act of service became an opportunity for sociability. Bick celebrated both his 80th and 90th birthdays with large parties in 1992 and 2002 that raised much fun and funds for FCLCA. As Master of Ceremonies and host, he shared his charm and punning skills with friends and Friends of all ages and persuasions.

As a member of the Berkeley Friends Library Committee, Bick helped research and produce the annual Quaker History calendars that were sold as a benefit for FCLCA. He personally made sure meetings across the state had a stock to sell. These were one of his real FCLCA-fundraising labors of love, and became a real claim to fame in later years. (Although in the true understated style, he didn’t ask one-third of what they were worth!)

Bick’s last living gift to FCLCA was at the Bay Area Dinner in April 2011, as he rolled in seated in the wheelchair he used at that point and personally made sure that the calendars were given their proper due in the program of political speakers and special guests.

Until the summer of 2011, Bick was blessed at the age of 98 to still have good health and a very active mind, enjoying engaged conversations on any number of topics and current events. He is missed, yet his spirit lives on. [FCLCA](#)

Does the internet have a conscience?

Well, yes... when FCLCA advocates like you use it to send a message to your legislators.

And in 2011 you sent over 1,000 emails and letters to legislators through FCLCA’s Action Network – and your voice of conscience was heard.

You made democracy stronger in California.

And it made a difference.

Together you, FCLCA, and our coalition partners

- Helped halt Senate Bill 251 that tied driver’s licenses to draft registration
- Helped pass restrictions on jailhouse “snitch” testimony
- Helped get the DREAM Act passed
- Helped focus attention and action on abuses in California’s prisons
- Helped build momentum for the SAFE California campaign – to put an initiative on the ballot in 2012 that will end the Death Penalty in California

Will you help FCLCA stay vigilant and effective?

Will you help us support you in your advocacy?

Please give today.

Donate online at fclca.org or send your check to FCLCA, 1225 8th Street, Suite 220, Sacramento, CA 95814. [FCLCA](#)



SAFE California Campaign Off and Running!

FCLCA is actively engaged in the SAFE California campaign to put an initiative on the ballot in November 2012 that will replace the Death Penalty in California.

Dozens of Friends and supporters have rallied to FCLCA's call to gather signatures and promote the campaign. Thank you!

We reprint below a powerful opinion piece by one of the Campaign's key spokespeople, former District Attorney Gil Garcetti, which first appeared in the Los Angeles *Daily News* on November 10, 2011.

Death Penalty Cases Not a Smart Use of Limited Funds

By Gil Garcetti

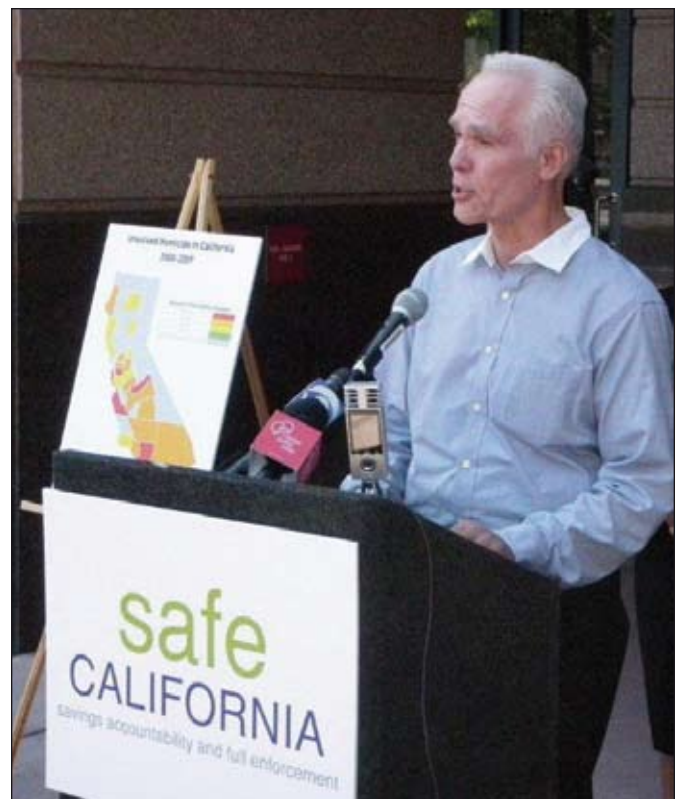
I served 32 years in the District Attorney's Office in Los Angeles.

I've been gone for nearly 11 years. In those accumulated 43 years, only two people sent to Death Row from an L.A. court have been executed, despite decades of agony for the families of murder victims and hundreds of millions of dollars in costs to taxpayers.

I have concluded that the death penalty law should be replaced with life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Why? Because the death penalty serves no useful purpose. It is not a deterrent. It is horrendously expensive, and we cannot afford it.

There also are too many instances, nationwide, where people have been on Death Row until new evidence determined their total innocence. I would not be shocked if one or more of the 720 prisoners on Death Row in California were innocent of the crime for which he or she awaits execution.

Even proponents of the death penalty agree that the current system brings no finality or closure to the family and friends of the murdered victim and that it is outrageously expensive. They argue that it can all be done faster or for less money. They don't fully understand California's laws or justice system.



Here's how a death penalty case works through the criminal justice system:

A highly skilled prosecutor decides on the formal charges. After a court hearing and a judge has concluded that there is a strong suspicion that the accused committed the crime, a special circumstances committee considers the case with the chairperson of the committee making the final decision pending review by the D.A.

If the decision is to seek the death penalty, many months – and often more than a year – go by before the trial begins. If the jury returns a guilty verdict of murder in the first degree with “special circumstances,” the penalty phase or second trial immediately takes place. If the jury cannot arrive at a unanimous decision, the penalty portion of the case might be retried in front of a new jury. If the jury imposes a death penalty verdict, the more than a decade long appellate phase begins.

The process is onerous and complicated. It has to be. Death is not reversible.

Today each death penalty case takes an average of 25 years, with most inmates dying before the process is complete. This costs taxpayers like you and me \$184 million every year. Any legislative attempt to expedite the process would mean more lawyers, more experts, and more special housing for Death Row inmates, plus an additional \$85 million every year, according to federal judge and death penalty supporter Arthur Alarcón.

There is no support in the Legislature for the extra costs and we clearly don't have the money to try

to expedite death penalty cases. Not all murders are death penalty eligible cases. But the families of those murder victims deserve finality and closure as much as the grieving families in death penalty cases. In 2000, the last year I was D.A., there were 1,000 murders in Los Angeles County. Of those, only 370 cases were solved.

In 2009, the last year for these figures, there were 699 murders but just 362 cases were solved. So even though today there are fewer homicide cases overall, the number of murder cases solved in L.A. has barely changed. Statewide, 46 percent of murders remain unsolved.

By replacing the death penalty with life imprisonment, we save \$1 billion over the next five years – money that can then be used for productive purposes including keeping our teachers, police and firefighters in their jobs.

We cannot bring back a murdered loved one. But we can help prevent future similar tragedies by using our very limited financial resources in smarter ways than to finance a law that serves no useful purpose. **FCLCA**

THE SAFE CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN TO REPLACE THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2012 NEEDS YOU!

Right now we need to gather signatures to get the SAFE California Initiative on the ballot in November 2012. We must have over 500,000 signatures by February 2012 to qualify.


Can you or your organization, church or meeting help?

Everything you need to know about gathering signatures, getting training, and how to volunteer is now at one place:

SIGN UP TODAY AT www.safecalifornia.org/volunteer

**FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON
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FCLCA Your Voice, Your Values

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Other FCLCA-supported bills signed by Governor Brown include:

- **SB 51**, which requires health care insurers to spend 85 percent of every dollar from group insurance premiums for the delivery of health care services and **AB 210**, which requires them to offer maternity benefits to women.
- **SB 397**, which provides for on-line voter registration.
- **AB 22**, which limits employers' use of credit histories when hiring employees.
- **AB 144**, which prohibits the open carry of firearms in public.
- **AB 809**, which requires the retention of records concerning long guns. **FCLCA**

PHOTO CREDITS:

p. 6 Interfaith Rally Against Budget Cuts, 2009
p. 9 Bicknell family
p. 10 SAFE California Campaign
All others istockphoto.com

The Friends Committee on Legislation of California (FCLCA) includes Friends and like-minded persons, a majority of whom are appointed by Monthly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends in California.

Expressions of views in this newsletter are guided by Statements of Policy prepared and approved by the FCLCA Committees. Seeking to follow the leadings of the Spirit, the FCLCA speaks for itself and for like-minded Friends. No organization can speak officially for the Religious Society of Friends.

While we strive above all for correctness and probity, we are quick to recognize that to err is human. We therefore solicit and welcome comments and corrections from our readers.