



**Californians United
for a Responsible Budget**



2012 ANNUAL REPORT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) would like to acknowledge the many thousands of people imprisoned throughout the state of California - we stand in solidarity with you and your families and friends in the fight for your freedom. CURB would like to thank our member organizations for their critical work and analysis.

CURB would also like to thank all those who worked on the drafting and development of our first annual report including Craig Gilmore, Sarah Haley, Emily Harris, Isaac Lev Szmonko, Bryan Welton, Ari Wohlfeiler, and Diana Zuñiga.

Photo credits to Aaron Aaronson, Daniel Arauz, Californians United for a Responsible Budget, Sheila Pinkel, and Youth Justice Coalition.

Layout by Suzanne Shaffer.

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Dear CURB Supporter,

It's a little hard to believe how far CURB has come over the last two years. Though our history stretches back almost a decade, we experienced unmatched growth in 2012—and just in time.

The last 24 months have brought some of the most challenging and exciting changes to the public debate about imprisonment in California that we've seen in decades. In counties and in Sacramento, we're beginning to see real evidence of a new public policy, even as the threat of ongoing prison and jail construction continues to imperil our future.

Last April, we witnessed the California legislature cancel \$4.1 billion in prison construction plans—validating 5 years of tireless organizing against AB 900, which nevertheless remains the largest prison and jail construction blueprint in history.

In November, we celebrated alongside founding CURB member Families to Amend California's Three Strikes as Prop 36, at long last, started to chip away from that most devastating of sentencing laws.

And throughout 2012, we held the line against jail construction in Los Angeles County and San Mateo County—standing up to plans that would waste a billion dollars and damage tens of thousands of families.

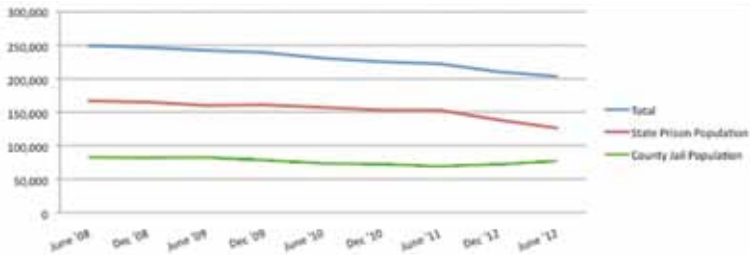
We have a long way to go. But we're more prepared than ever—particularly after hiring our first Los Angeles-based organizer, and launching a true Field Organizing Program. More than ever, the future of California depends on grassroots organizing in communities of color and poor communities impacted by the criminal legal system—particularly in Southern California. More than ever, CURB is ready to meet that challenge.

As always, it is an honor to work with each and every one of our member organizations—and witness the collaboration, debate, and relationship-building that makes CURB a true coalitional force. CURB member organizations are the heart, soul, and backbone of resistance to California's prison crises. We are grateful for the talent, vision, and passion they—and you—bring to everything we do.

Yours,

Emily Harris, Statewide Coordinator

Diana Zuñiga, Field Organizer



The number of people incarcerated in California has declined since 2008

In 2012, California's combined budgetary and humanitarian crisis continued. Far-reaching cuts to public education and health, life-enhancing programs, and jobs, accompanied alarming conditions and overcrowding in California prisons at rates as high as 292% capacity. With growing critical attention to this crisis, there is a clear and urgent need to dramatically shift state and county priorities toward programs that meet our needs rather than imprison our loved ones.

A door was opened for significant reform in 2011 when the Supreme Court ordered the state to reduce its prison population in the following three years with its *Brown v. Plata* decision. It was in this context that CURB launched our Budget for Humanity Campaign and took statewide action to highlight a bold strategy for reuniting families and communities, while saving California billions of dollars by freeing the state from its costly commitment to mass incarceration.

Realignment—Governor Brown's response to the Supreme Court decision—moved power and resources from the state to the counties, creating both opportunities and dangers for Californians concerned with justice. Local counties are now deciding between programs that offer alternatives to incarceration and

costly jail expansion; investment in education versus hiring more sherrifs. Across all 58 counties, the balance of power between those two visions of the future is playing out on a daily basis.

CURB brings a battle-tested analysis and campaign strategy to this moment. Our work makes common cause with diverse communities, connects the financial and human costs of incarceration, and identifies policy proposals with the greatest potential to shrink the system. In the year to come, we are confident it will continue to empower all Californians to work together for the state we all want to live in.



TRAINING

We prioritized skills-based trainings to strengthen our members' capacity and unity. In January of 2012, we organized a media and spokesperson training for 10 CURB member organizations in Los Angeles, leading to an action at the L.A. Board of Supervisors in opposition to jail expansion.

YOUTH JUSTICE COALITION



"It is essential for the Youth Justice Coalition to be a part of CURB. It connects us to groups across the state working to break California's addiction to incarceration. It provides those of us with convictions and our families a mic to amplify our suffering and our solutions. It supports the building of powerful movements at

the local level to block prison and jail expansion. And it exposes all Californians to the fact that prisons are bankrupting our ability to send youth to college, to develop jobs, to keep libraries, hospitals and parks open." —Kim McGill

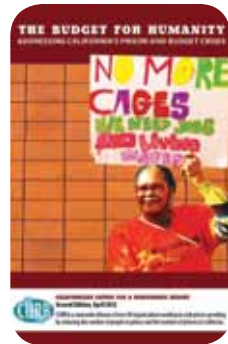
POLICY ADVOCACY

During the 2011-12 legislative cycle, CURB anchored a special Women's Policy Institute criminal justice cohort. CURB members received valuable training on legislation and state budget advocacy, and shared unique organizing experience and analysis. Through testimony at State Assembly and Senate hearings, actions at CDCR, mobilizations and lobby days, CURB strengthened our presence in Sacramento. We led a push to lift California's restrictive prison media ban, along with a series of legislative proposals to reduce the prison and jail population, and stopped legislation that would have built additional prison beds.



SHAPING THE STORY

Our work was featured in over 145 news stories in 2012. CURB extended our consistent presence in media coverage throughout the state, and in four key regions (Sacramento, Bay Area, Central Valley, and Los Angeles). Communications tools such as our Realignment Report Card and updated Budget for Humanity, along with webinars and e-action alerts, amplify our policy platform while advancing our grassroots organizing.



NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

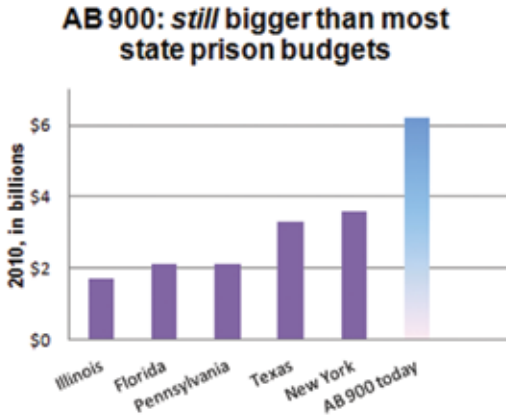
In March of 2012, CURB was excited to gather and finalize the formation of our National Advisory Board – one of the most impressive slates of criminal justice experts anywhere. Our Board includes leaders from across the United States and throughout California with a diverse background in policy change and anti-prison work, including two members who are currently imprisoned in California.

DOLORES CANALES CALIFORNIA FAMILIES TO ABOLISH SOLITARY CONFINEMENT & NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

“My involvement with CURB began in July of 2011 during what has been referred to as one of the largest hunger strikes of prisoners in the state of California. It was during this time that family members organized and formed CFASC (California Families to Abolish Solitary Confinement), a grassroots organization working to raise awareness about the use of solitary confinement in our prison system. The work that CURB does is far greater than just dealing with the issues of solitary confinement, but rather challenges the system to seek rehabilitative efforts, by bringing to light the true cost of prison spending.”



HOW BIG IS AB-900?



CURB has carried the fight against AB-900—the state’s plan to charge taxpayers \$12 billion to construct 53,000 new prison beds – since the day it was signed. In April, we delivered 4,000 signed postcards to the Budget Subcommittee 5 Chair and the Governor, pushing for cancellation. In June, we got huge news – CDCR capitulated to years of pressure and slashed AB 900 in half – cutting an estimated \$4.1 Billion from prison and jail expansion.

Los Angeles CURB members organized community mobilizations to reject Sheriff Baca’s \$1.4 Billion plan to expand L.A. County jails, while working with Northern California CURB members to build pressure in Sacramento to halt the plan.

In Northern California CURB, Critical Resistance and other member organizations joined forces with All of Us or None in San Mateo to stop the new \$140-160 million jail expansion proposal. The jail is sited on a toxic waste site. CURB has helped our members get – and stay – in front of County Supervisors, built alliances with social justice groups in other sectors, and launched an environmental investigation of toxins on the proposed site.



On January 8th, despite reports of overcrowding at the Central California Women's Facility at nearly 200% capacity, Governor Brown boastfully declared "the prison crisis is over in California."

On January 26th, we supported the Californian Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP) and the Chowchilla Freedom Rally Coalition in mobilizing over 400 people from organizations and communities across the state to Chowchilla for a Freedom Day Rally at the Valley State Prison and Central California Women's Facility. Simultaneous rallies were held in San Mateo, Philadelphia and London. We know the prison crisis is far from over, and the Chowchilla rally marks just the beginning of our work for 2013.

DIANA ZUÑIGA—STATEWIDE FIELD ORGANIZER



Diana joined the CURB staff in November of 2012. She brings to the coalition years of community organizing and leadership skills honed in campaign work for the Latino Voters League, the South-west Voter Registration Project and the Drug Policy Alliance. Based in Los Angeles, Diana provides leadership and support to county-level struggles about realignment, and works to develop a deeper and broader base for CURB in Southern California. Diana has several close family members who are imprisoned.

“Being a new addition to CURB has been an exciting experience that has fueled my desire to continue to work for a more humane and socially conscious California. The organizing and collaboration that our member organizations partake in continues to exceed my expectations. From the Chowchilla Freedom Rally to the local Los Angeles organizing efforts, I have seen our statewide coalition bring a voice of intention and experience to the forefront of change.”

EMILY HARRIS—STATEWIDE COORDINATOR

Emily became CURB’s first full-time staff member as the coalition’s Statewide Coordinator in February of 2011. She comes to CURB with extensive experience working with women in prison through roles in Free Battered Women/California Coalition for Women’s Prisoners, and the Prison Creative Arts Project. Emily’s role is to maintain and communicate a bird’s eye view of the coalition’s work and well-being; to coordinate each workgroup; to represent the coalition before allies; to facilitate and support the contributions of each member organization; and to ensure the overall cohesion and strategic movement of CURB.



“The work of CURB has grown at a critical time in California, demanding better use of California’s resources, a reduction in the number of people being locked-up and common sense alternatives to imprisonment. Our member organizations have been leading the struggle against mass incarceration for decades and now our message is finally being heard.”

Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) is a broad-based coalition of over 50 organizations seeking to CURB prison spending by reducing the number of people in prison and the number of prisons in the state.

CURRENT MEMBERS:

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction, Treatment and Healing)	Central California Environmental Justice Network	Out of Control: Lesbian Committee to Support Political Prisoners
A New Way of Life	Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)	Prison Activist Resource Center
Action Committee for Women in Prison	Coalition on Homelessness	Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition
All of Us or None	Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice	Prison Policy Initiative
All of Us or None – Bay Area Chapter	Community Works: Project WHAT!	Progressive Christians Uniting
All of Us or None – Los Angeles Chapter	Critical Resistance Oakland	Progressive Democrats of Los Angeles
All of Us or None – San Bernardino Chapter	Critical Resistance Los Angeles	Proyecto Common Touch
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California	Drug Policy Alliance	Senate Select Community Committee on California's Correctional System
American Friends Service Committee, Pacific Mountain Region	Education Not Incarceration Coalition	The Sentencing and Justice Reform Advocacy (SJRA) Advocate
Architects/Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility	Enlace	Southern California Chapter of Americans for Democratic Action
Break the Chains	Families to Amend California's Three Strikes	Southern California Library
California Coalition for Women Prisoners	Families of the Incarcerated, Office of Restorative Justice at the Archdiocese of L.A.	The Transgender, Gender Variant & Intersex (TGI) Justice Project
California Families to Abolish Solitary Confinement	Free Battered Women	UC Berkeley Graduate Assembly
California Partnership	Friends Committee on Legislation	United for Drug Policy Reform
California Prison Focus	Just Cause Oakland	University of California Student Association
California Prison Moratorium Project	Justice Now	Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (California branch)
Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment	Justice Policy Institute	Women for Change Foundation
Center for Young Women's Development	Labor Community Strategy Center	Youth Justice Coalition
	Legal Services for Prisoners With Children	Youth Law Center
	Life Support Alliance	
	National Lawyers Guild- Committee on Mass Incarceration	

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:

Susan Burton (A New Way of Life), Dolores Canales (California Families to Abolish Solitary Confinement), Jane Dorotik (Justice Now), Soffiyah Elijah (Correctional Association of New York), Ruth Wilson Gilmore (City University of New York), Kenneth Hartman (The Other Death Penalty Project), Bonnie Long (Inmate Family Council), Sara Norman (Prison Law Office), Dorsey Nunn (Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, Marj Plumb (Women's Policy Institute), Nicole Porter (The Sentencing Project)