



Californians United for a Responsible Budget

Oakland Office:

1322 Webster St # 210
Oakland, CA 94612
510-435-1176 (c)
510-839-7615 (f)

Los Angeles Office:

1137 E. Redondo Blvd.
Inglewood, CA 90302
213-864-8931(c)
www.curbprisonspending.org

Talking Points: Senate Budget Subcommittee No 5, April 7 Redirect \$250 million away from jails!

Summary of Problem: The proposed 2016-2017 budget designates \$250 million of the General Fund for jail construction. This budget proposal will harm communities that have been most impacted by criminalization, creating more jail beds to be filled rather than addressing root causes in our communities.

My name is _____, and I am here with _____, [a member organization/ally of CURB].

Brief intro of you/your organization/CURB (e.g.: *Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) is a statewide coalition of organizations working to reduce the number of people in prison and jail in California and invest in community solutions, including affordable housing, healthcare, and the social safety net.*)

I urge you to reject the proposal for another \$250 million on jail construction because [include reasons pertinent to you or your loved ones]:

- **Every dollar spent on jail construction is a dollar diverted from community services and alternatives to incarceration.** Adding beds to the jail system will strongly discourage counties from making changes that have already been proven to reduce the population, and would remove any incentive to explore new alternatives.
- **Building jails is not a sustainable solution to overcrowding because it does not fundamentally address any of the causes of incarceration.** We need to invest in our communities, and implement common sense reforms like pre-trial release programs, pre-trial diversion into community-based programs, refusing to honor voluntary Immigration (ICE) holds, and expanding access to re-entry services and support, mental health, and drug treatment programs.
- **Jails are an inappropriate and ineffective place to receive mental health treatment and other programming.** The stated purpose of these grants is to replace or renovate county jails to improve rehabilitative programming, mental health services, custodial housing, reentry, or treatment space, reflecting the recent trend of “social service jails.” However, evidence shows that jail exacerbates mental illness and substance use. It is critical to prioritize supportive community based services and treatment programs that don’t require incarceration.
- **More prison and jail expansion would undo the progress of previous reforms.** This \$250 million is a betrayal of the promises of realignment, Prop 47, and other reforms supported by the voters, who already recognize that the California prison system is expensive, harmful, violent, and ineffective at solving our communities’ real problems.
- **At a time when jail populations are decreasing, why are we allocating more funding to build more jails?** Due to Prop 47, county jail populations have decreased by thousands of



Californians United for a Responsible Budget

Oakland Office:

1322 Webster St # 210
Oakland, CA 94612
510-435-1176 (c)
510-839-7615 (f)

Los Angeles Office:

1137 E. Redondo Blvd.
Inglewood, CA 90302
213-864-8931(c)
www.curbprisonspending.org

people. Jail construction would reverse progress by enabling counties to maintain or expand incarceration rates.

- **Since 2008, CA has already spent \$2.2 billion on expanding county jails;** more than 40 counties are attempting to build new jails and are currently in the process of building 14,000 new jail beds!

I urge you to use this \$250 million from the state's General Fund towards supporting low-income communities, currently and formerly incarcerated people, and interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, including *[include alternatives pertinent to you or your loved ones]:*