

CLOSING CALIFORNIA PRISONS AND RELEASING PEOPLE IS URGENTLY REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH FOR ALL.

Prisons are toxic sites of air, land, and water that perpetuate harm for our communities both inside and outside of prisons. **People inside have forcibly been placed on the frontlines of the climate crisis and public health threats** like COVID. **This makes the call to close prisons more urgent than ever.**

The 2023-24 May Revise Corrections Budget allocates \$19.5 Billion for Corrections, with \$14.1 for CDCr (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation). **The state budget for corrections has not decreased despite ongoing reductions in the number of people incarcerated.**

No amount of funding can 'fix' the state's wasteful carceral system. Instead, **the state's commitments to economic justice, racial justice, and environmental justice must include a concrete roadmap for closing prisons.** Furthermore, every dollar spent on prisons is a dollar that isn't going to long-term, sustainable climate solutions like renewable energy generation, responsible use of scarce water resources, investment in public transportation, and green jobs.



CURB's #CloseCAPrisons campaign demands the state close 10 prisons by 2025, reduce the number of people caged, and shift cost-savings from corrections to housing, healthcare, green jobs, and community-based services. Closing prisons is a necessity to build a healthier, safer, greener California for all.

WE NEED TO CLOSE PRISONS TO FIGHT THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

*Prisons temporarily sustain small communities through employment but **ultimately devastate individuals and society, making them remarkably similar to oil and mineral companies.** They harm local environments and the planet while enriching a few special interest groups."* -Brian Kaneda, CURB (LA Times- "When a Prison Closes...")

We must **transition to a sustainable future by uniting labor, community interests, and what's good for the planet** through changes that move us away from extractive economies like fossil fuels and prisons towards sustainable, green jobs.

- The physical and financial resources that we will gain from **closing prisons in California provide a perfect opportunity to repurpose the land and money** that is currently being poured into a hazardous prison system. **Prison closures in California provide a generative opportunity for just transitions away from incarceration economies and towards ones that are healthy and safe.**
- The oil and gas industry, prisons, policing, and surveillance are all extractive economies we must move away from in favor of **sustainable regenerative economies & systems of care, such as green jobs, and community based solutions to harm and violence.**



SCAN ME



THE EFFECTS OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS ARE EXACERBATED IN PRISONS. CLOSING PRISONS IS AN IMPERATIVE STEP TOWARDS ACHIEVING ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR US ALL.



- In California, where wildfires are worsening with the effects of climate change, **24 prisons, housing tens of thousands of people, are within 5 miles of fire hazard zones.**
- CDCr has proven to be under-prepared for wildfires as evident during the Dixie Fire, where incarcerated folks were left without N95s and unable to contact loved ones.

"I think we can assume that fires are going to continue regularly and are now going to be chronic. All signs point to that prisons don't work, and so we need to figure something else out, because it's just untenable."

-Woods Ervin, Critical Resistance ([The Intercept](#)- "Dark, Smoky Cells" by Alleen Brown)

- "People in prison may be disproportionately susceptible to climate-driven extreme temperatures, disasters, diseases, and displacement." ([Climate Change and Incarceration](#))
 - Older folks who are imprisoned, those with mental health and neurological conditions, folks with limited mobility, are all especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures.

"Triple digit temperatures are always expected every summer. I do not know if CDCR bothered to prepare for next summer's heat."

-anonymous, CCWE

**CLOSE
CALIFORNIA
PRISONS**

*for Environmental
Justice*

PRISONS ARE TOXIC - FOR PEOPLE IMPRISONED INSIDE, THE COMMUNITIES THEY'RE IN, AND THE PEOPLE WORKING THERE.

"Lack of access to clean water and possible remediations for incarcerated people... disproportionately impacts Black people and exacerbates racial health disparities." -"Uncovering Harmful Exposures in Carceral Environments"

- High Desert State Prison provides **tap water that contains levels of arsenic that are 2,264 times higher** than what is considered to be safe for human health, has been cited over a dozen times for their arsenic levels, in addition to radium levels that are 13 times higher than health recommendations. ([Peoples Plan](#), pg 11)
- [A recent study](#) on water in Kern Valley State Prison (KVSP) and nearby Central Valley communities found that there have been **multiple times over the past 2 decades where drinking water in the prison has exceeded safe arsenic levels.**
- At least **21 state prison water sources are toxic and unsafe for human consumption** with issues like high nitrate levels - fatally toxic; *Helicobacter pylori* - linked to stomach ulcers and stomach cancer; and Legionnaires' disease - causing at least 4 deaths in CA prisons in the last decade. ([People's Plan](#), pg 11)
- In Corcoran, **2 prisons face imminent flooding** risk due to refilling of Tulare lake
- Late 2021, COVID: **"With more than half a million infections behind bars and over 3,000 deaths, America's response to COVID-19 in prisons and jails has been a failure."** [Prison Policy Institute](#)
- Valley Fever: Four new California prisons were built in the early 1990s and located in counties with the **highest Valley Fever contraction rates.** In 2015, a federally-ordered screening found that eight percent of imprisoned people in California tested positive for Valley Fever.



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