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60TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 702: The PROMYSE Promoting Youth Success and Empowerment Act

BILL SUMMARY

AB 702 would help California fully realize the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act's vision of providing collaborative, restorative, community and health-based services for young people and ensuring equitable representation and decision-making within county oversight bodies.

BACKGROUND

The Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA), which was created under the Schiff-Cárdenas Crime Prevention Act of 2000, was enacted to support youth in their communities and limit their involvement in the justice system by distributing funds to counties through non-competitive grants. However, for over twenty years, county spending has fallen short of the bill's original goals.

PROBLEM

Since 2000, youth arrests have declined by 89 percent, from 243,090 in 2000 to 26,000 in 2022. California has also seen a 91 percent decline in referrals to probation since 2006, from 187,296 in 2006 to 16,252 in 2022. However, most counties spend the majority of their JJCPA funds on probation staffing with little to none invested in public agencies like education, arts, public health and community-based organizations.

In 2020, the California State Auditor released [a report](#) verifying long-held concerns about poor JJCPA spending, decision-making, and reporting. The audit included an in-depth review of a diverse sample of counties, finding that counties maintained severely outdated spending plans. Four of the five counties sampled spent over 75 percent of their Fiscal Year 2017-18 JJCPA funds on probation departments, running counter to the stated goals of the program.

While each county is required to make JJCPA funding decisions through a Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC), the audit found that counties left mandatory stakeholder seats vacant. In fact, 20 percent of all California counties lacked a JJCC during

the audit review period. Additionally, many counties' reports failed to evaluate whether their JJCPA-funded programs have been effective.

In the years since the audit, county spending continues to fall short of the bill's original goals and youths' most urgent needs. In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, 1 in 2 counties spent 70 percent or more of JJCPA funds on probation staff. In 2022, 19 counties spent JJCPA funds on truancy programs and school based probation officers, putting youth at risk of entering the school-to-prison pipeline. In 2021 and 2022, Fresno and Sacramento Counties were both found unlawfully holding meetings on juvenile justice reform behind closed doors. Dismal data reporting has continued, allowing for incidents such as in Los Angeles County, where probation was found to have spent nearly \$400 thousand yearly on a youth diversion program that served zero youth participants.

SOLUTION

AB 702 will address these long-standing problems, further the goals of the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, and support much-needed youth programming by:

- Requiring a greater investment of JJCPA funds into public agencies such as arts, parks and recreation, and behavioral health focussed agencies, as well as healing-centered, restorative, community based programs and services that reduce and prevent young people's engagement with law enforcement.
- Ensuring equitable community representation and improved decision-making on county JJCCs overseeing county Juvenile Justice Plans and the disbursement of JJCPA funds.

SUPPORT

Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (Co-sponsor)
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action, California (Co-sponsor)

California Alliance for Youth & Community Justice
(Co-sponsor)
Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (Co-sponsor)
Children's Defense Fund-California (Co-sponsor)
Community Interventions (Co-sponsor)
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice
(Co-sponsor)
Fresh Lifelines for Youth (Co-sponsor)
National Center for Youth Law (Co-sponsor)
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve
Lives (Co-sponsor)
Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos (Co-Sponsor)
SBX Youth & Family Services (Co-sponsor)
Safe Return Project
Silicon Valley De-Bug
Los Angeles Youth Uprising Coalition
Anti-Recidivism Coalition
Arts for Healing and Justice Network
Urban Peace Institute

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