

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE
FROM: ASSOCIATION FOR LOS ANGELES DEPUTY SHERIFFS; CALIFORNIA
FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE; CALIFORNIA NARCOTIC OFFICERS ASSOCIATION;
CALIFORNIA PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION; **CALIFORNIA POLICE CHIEFS
ASSOCIATION**; LONG BEACH POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION; LOS ANGELES
COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY STEVE COOLEY; LOS ANGELES COUNTY
PROFESSIONAL PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION; LOS ANGELES COUNTY POLICE
CHIEFS ASSOCIATION; LOS ANGELES POLICE PROTECTIVE LEAGUE; PASADENA
POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION; RIVERSIDE SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION; SANTA ANA
POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS ABOUT PROPOSED BUDGET

DATE: JUNE 22, 2009

The law enforcement organizations listed above are extremely concerned about the damage to public safety that will be caused by adoption of the Budget Conference Committee report. We respectfully request that these concerns be addressed before any budget is approved. First, the Conference Committee has approved a \$ 1.2 billion reduction in the CDCR budget, along with categorical reductions of a number of wobblers to misdemeanors. These type of reductions contemplate wholesale accelerated release of at least 20,000 felons into our communities. Not only will this create immediate and severe public safety challenges, but we would submit that this is a false economy. Here's why: If past is prologue, 70% of the 20,000 released felons will recidivate within three years. Studies that we are aware of suggest that each of these 14,000 felons who recidivate will commit approximately 13 felonies before they are apprehended – or a total of 182,000 new felonies over a three year period (20% of which are violent felonies). According to the Rand Corporation's most conservative figures, the average cost of a felony is about \$ 18,500. Therefore, the proposed \$ 1.2 billion reduction in CDCR will really result in an actual cost to government of \$ 3.3 billion. In effect, the unintended consequence of this budget provision will be to increase costs, not reduce them

Second, the Conference Committee took action that undercut the very concept of "public" safety. The budget that is before you will require that local law enforcement agencies pay for forensic services from the state crime lab. This proposal has been vigorously opposed by every Attorney General to whom it has been presented, even though their office is the theoretical "beneficiary". Requiring local police agencies to pay for forensic services effectively means that the quality of criminal investigation – for the first time in the history of the state – will be a function of the wealth of a local community. For example, affluent communities will be able to have the state lab process rape kits, while poorer communities will have to inevitably triage their investigatory resources. The impact of this budget provision is to short-change crime victims based on the economic status of the community in which they live. -

Third, the Conference Committee has taken action that has wiped out all 51 of the multi-jurisdictional task forces that have been run by the Department of Justice Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement. These task forces have been essential for local agencies in their efforts to combat

increasingly sophisticated methamphetamine operations. At a time when the Mexican Drug Cartels are poised to move many of their meth operations to California, these cuts will only accelerate their efforts, which will have a drastic effect on the quality of life in our communities. -

We are aware that in these times of budget distress cuts must be made, but these particular actions taken by the Conference Committee irrevocably compromise our ability to protect our communities. We respectfully request these items be deleted from the budget; failing that we respectfully request that you reject the budget that is before you.

All of the law enforcement organizations listed above are willing to work collaboratively with you to develop budget approaches that are both fiscally responsible and do not harm the core public safety mission; we look forward to that dialogue.