



## FACTSHEET

### Proposition 47

The Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act of 2014, also known as Proposition 47, is a voter initiative on the **November 2014 California ballot** that will change sentencing for low-level nonviolent crimes such as simple drug possession and petty theft from felonies to misdemeanors.

- Proposition 47 would reclassify property crimes of \$950 or less, such as **grand theft, shoplifting, receiving stolen property, writing bad checks and check forgery** as **misdemeanors**.
- **Drug possession** for personal use would almost always be a misdemeanor.

### Education, not incarceration

- **Prop 47 is estimated to save California over \$1 billion over five years**, and redirects this savings towards schools and vital community services
- **65%** of funds to **mental health and substance abuse treatment**
- **25%** of funds would go to supporting **programs to reduce the incidence of crime and school drop out rates**, as well as support victims of crimes
- **10%** of funds would be used to make **grants to trauma recovery centers** to provide services to victims of crime

### Over reliance on incarceration

- The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world with 2 million people in state, federal and private prisons.
- California has the highest incarceration rate in the United States.
- Nearly half (47%) of people incarcerated in state prisons in 2011 were convicted of non-violent drug, property, or public order crimes.
- California prisons are overcrowded with more individuals than it has capacity to hold.
- California spends more than \$60,000 per year for each prisoner. That's more than we pay beginning teachers.

### Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the criminal justice system

- The number of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the correctional system is small but growing. From 2000 to 2010, Asian and Pacific Islanders rate of incarceration has quadrupled.
- In California, APIs comprise 3.4% of the prison population.
- Among API prisoners in California, the largest percentages are Vietnamese and Filipino, followed by Pacific Islander and Laotian.
- One study by the Asian Support Committee found that in California, 64.6% of API prisoners are immigrants and refugees.
- APA youth are 3.8 times as likely to be sentenced to California Youth Authority (state prison for youth) than white youth.

### Racial disparities

- **Racial minorities make up about 30 percent of the United States' population**, but they account for **60 percent of those imprisoned**.
- African Americans are twice as likely to be arrested and almost four times as likely to experience the use of force during encounters with the police.
- African Americans make up 40 percent and Latinos 20 percent of confined youth.
- African American youth are more than 2.5 times as likely as white youth to be arrested for a property offense.
- African American women are three times more likely than white women to be incarcerated, while Latina women are 69 percent more likely than white women to be incarcerated.

### Inadequate medical care

- Medical care is inadequate. Serious illnesses are often undiagnosed and untreated.
- Prisoners in need of psychiatric treatment are made to wait for many hours in cages the shape and size of telephone booths.
- There is nearly one suicide per week in the CA prison system.

### Separation of families

- **2.7 million** children have parents that are incarcerated.
- **Two thirds** of these parents are in prison for non-violent offenses.
- Incarceration affects a child's well-being and stability, leading to negative behavioral and educational effects.

### Impact of the War on Drugs on Prison Population

- Although rates of drug use and sales are similar across racial and ethnic lines, African Americans and Latinos are far more likely to be arrested and imprisoned than whites.
- Most drug offense convictions are for possession alone.
- Punishment for drug offense convictions is perpetuated outside of the criminal justice system by denying child custody, voting rights, employment, business loans, licensing, student aid, public housing and other public assistance to people with criminal convictions.

### Private prison industrial complex

- The prison industry complex is one of the fastest-growing industries in the United States and its investors are on Wall Street. It also has direct advertising campaigns, architecture companies, construction companies, plumbing supply companies, food supply companies, armed security, and padded cells in a large variety of colors.
- The two largest private prison companies are Corrections Corp. of America and The Geo Group. Together, they own and operate 132 facilities nationwide that generate \$3.3 billion annually.
- In 2006, to alleviate prison overcrowding, then-Gov. Schwarzenegger signed an Emergency Proclamation authorizing California to transfer people to private, out-of-state prisons. By 2011, over 10,000 California prisoners had been transferred to five private prisons.

