



**COUNTY OF LAKE
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December 19, 2023

The Honorable Corey Jackson
Member of the Assembly
Chair, Local
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE – AB 702 (Jackson), Local Government Financing – Juvenile Justice

Dear Assemblymember Jackson:

First, thank you for the important work you are doing to promote the well-being of every Californian, and ensuring our health care systems are broadly prepared to provide care for vulnerable individuals in our State's richly diverse communities, particularly as Chair of the Select Committee on California's Mental Health Crisis.

As you will very well appreciate, trauma-informed and culturally responsive services are crucial to supporting the health of many Californians. This certainly includes young people involved with the justice system at the local level. Therefore, we are compelled to express our respectful Opposition to AB 702.

AB 702 would make fundamental changes to the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). These changes would be detrimental to Probation departments' ability to coordinate the delivery of services and supports to youth in our communities. Integration of systems is essential to continuity of care. As written, this bill would result in system fragmentation. Every day, we engage with young people facing inflection points; disruptions of service can frustrate or even reverse hard-earned progress. Undoubtedly, that is not your intent with this Legislation, but it could be a result, if the bill is not amended.

As written, AB 702 proposes to enact three major changes to the funding and coordination of local juvenile justice system activities. It would redirect Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) funds, change the designated chair and overall composition of local Juvenile Justice Coordinating Councils (JJCC), and recast elements of required multiagency juvenile justice plans. Previous legislative efforts have proposed similar changes (*and faced strong, well-grounded opposition*), including AB 1007 (Jones-Sawyer, 2020) and SB 493 (Bradford, 2021)

Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention act (JJCPA) funding is vital to counties' delivery of a continuum of robust, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services that support youth at

various levels of engagement with the juvenile justice system – from the earliest stages of vulnerability to system involvement.

In many instances, JJCPA funds are dedicated to staffing and personnel costs that serve as the foundation of our juvenile probation departments. These resources support the full array of local responsibilities for system-involved youth, up to and including counties' diligent and ongoing implementation of SB 823 (2020) that shifted care, treatment, and custody of youth and young adults previously eligible for placement at one of the state's Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities.

Additionally, any requirement to redirect JJCPA resources brings constitutional concerns, given this funding resides within the 2011 fiscal structure that is protected under the provisions of Proposition 30 (2012).

Under current law, each County's Chief Probation Officer (CPO) serves as chair of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC). Changing this norm, as AB 702 proposes, would have far-reaching implications.

You will appreciate, Probation departments are critical points of connection for youth in need of treatment and support, regularly making referrals to public agencies and community organizations who can help. Additional JJCC committee members bring a diverse set of experiences and perspectives, and work with the CPO to coordinate and plan for the safety and rehabilitation of local youth.

In smaller, rural counties, like Lake County, community-based organizations are more likely to fluctuate in capacity, and government agencies commonly fill crucial gaps. Probation staff provide and facilitate treatment programs on behalf of the courts (and for the benefit of youth), for example. Probation also staff teach Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, facilitate Child Family Team Meetings, and act as mentors and support for justice-involved youth.

In addition, our County has historically experienced challenges seating a full JJCC, particularly recruiting community members and formerly justice-involved individuals to serve. This legislation would create considerable obstacles rather than opportunities due to its specificity regarding JJCC composition.

Plainly, AB 702 would be detrimental to Lake County's efforts to build and sustain a responsive and locally tailored set of services for justice system-involved youth. Thank you for considering our position, and we encourage you to reach out to Wendy Mondfrans, Chief Probation Officer,

Sincerely,

Jessica Pyska,
Chair, Lake County Board of Supervisors

cc: *Honorable Members and Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee*