

YES on State Proposition 20

Proposition 20 seeks to amend AB 109 (2011), Prop. 47 (2014), and Proposition 57 (2016), all of which were intended to lower the state's inmate population by softening criminal sentencing, easing parole supervision laws and allowing early release to more offenders.

If Prop. 20 will serve to increase state prison inmate populations (and all costs associated with higher inmate populations), it will also make our communities and schools much safer by keeping dangerous criminals behind bars for the full length of their sentences. **The cost savings here are *incalculable*: homeowners and vehicle insurance premiums will decrease as robberies and burglaries decrease. Health insurance premiums, co-pays, and deductibles will go down as we experience fewer assaults and batteries. The enormous cost associated with the investigation and tracking down of repeat offenders will be drastically reduced as we will have DNA samples on file, which will make apprehending reoffenders significantly less costly.**

What legislation will Prop. 20 alter?

AB 109 served to move inmates convicted of certain “non-serious”, “non-violent”, or “non-sexual” offenses from California’s state prison system down to local county jails. Additionally, the bill put the onus for supervising these parolees on the counties as well.

Proposition 47, inappropriately named “The Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act”, does just the opposite. Prop. 47 reclassified certain theft and drug charges from felonies to misdemeanors (read shorter sentences and consequences). Additionally, if an inmate is in custody for a felony that would have qualified as a misdemeanor under this proposition, they can now petition the court for a resentencing under the new law. It also allows convicted felons who have completed their sentences to petition the court to reclassify their convictions as misdemeanors.

Proposition 57, “The Public Safety and Rehabilitation Act” basically increased the chances of parole for felons who had been convicted of the previously mentioned “non-violent crimes”. Prop. 57 also took the decision of whether or not to charge certain juveniles as adults away from prosecutors (a privilege granted them by Prop. 21 in 2000) and handed this choice to judges who are not fully informed of all case evidence.

What Does Prop. 20 Accomplish?

- Prop. 20 will restrict parole opportunities for “non-violent” criminals by adding these crimes back to the list of *violent* felonies for which early parole isn’t allowed.
- Prop. 20 also makes parole less likely by requiring the parole board to consider additional factors (such as the inmate’s mental condition and circumstances surrounding the crime) before granting parole. The proposition also allows the prosecutor to order a review of the parole board’s decision.
- Prop. 20 will also once again allow prosecutors to charge certain types of theft and fraud crimes as either felonies or misdemeanors (wobblers) at their discretion, whereas prior to this, Prop. 47 mandated that these be charged as misdemeanors only.
- Prop. 20 creates both serial crime and organized retail crime as two new types of crimes in the Penal Code, chargeable as either felonies or misdemeanors.
- Prop. 20 mandates that people convicted of certain crimes (i.e. domestic violence, prostitution with a minor) that were originally classified as wobblers prior to the 2014 legislation, submit to the collection of DNA samples.

We urge a “YES” vote on Proposition 20

See also: <https://keepcalsafe.org/about/>