

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Selina Ho
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2024 3:08 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 10/21/24 Agenda Item #16--No on Prop 36

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Hi,

My name is Selina and I am a constituent of District 2. I'm writing to urge you to oppose agenda item #16. I have seen first-hand how over-policing and mass incarceration have impacted Pasadena and we must continue to invest more into care and services for our community instead of punishment.

In Pasadena, Prop 47 dollars have helped fund Flintridge Center and Learning Works—organizations working to help people get and stay on their feet—as well as services that police, firefighters, and public health departments use for unhoused people in Pasadena and substance use disorder programs in Pasadena. Prop 36 could gut that funding.

Pasadena communities deserve to feel and be safe. Prop 36 will dangerously veer Pasadena away from safety. Proposition 36 will roll back Proposition 47, which in 10 years has been successful by all measures at reducing incarceration, reducing recidivism, and delivering millions of dollars to services for Pasadena residents.

Thank you,
Selina Ho

10/21/2024
Item 16

October 21, 2024

2024 OCT 21 PM 3:48

Pasadena City Council

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Via email: vgordo@cityofpasadena.net; smadison@cityofpasadena.net;
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vdelacuba@cityofpasadena.net; janastewart@cityofpasadena.net;
amellem@cityofpasadena.net.

Re: In Opposition to Item 16: Motion, Entitled, “ALLOWS FELONY CHARGES AND INCREASES SENTENCES FOR CERTAIN DRUG AND THEFT CRIMES”

Dear Pasadena City Council,

My name is Michelle Parris. I am program director of Vera California, a local initiative of the Vera Institute of Justice, a national non-profit and non-partisan organization, which uses the power of data and research to drive effective policies for safe, healthy, and thriving communities. **I write to urge the Council to oppose Item 16 and Proposition 36.**

Instead of funding the care first programs which are proven to prevent crime in Pasadena – things like victims’ services, drug treatment, homelessness prevention, and K-12 school programs – **Prop 36 would strip more than \$100 million each year** in for those vital services.¹ In Los Angeles County, these programs have had excellent results:

- The rate of new convictions for people who participate in these programs is more than **four times lower** than that of people coming out of state prison.
 - Only **10 percent** of people in the county’s programs faced a new criminal conviction in the years after incarceration, compared to almost **42 percent** rate for people coming out of prison.²

Pasadena itself – including its police department, fire department, and public health department – is at risk of losing funding for critical and proven effective programs if Prop 36 passes. For example:

- **Pasadena’s police department** received \$2.5 million in funds at risk from Prop 36 for job training and drug treatment.³
- **Pasadena’s fire department**, public health department, and Huntington Hospital received \$1.1 million to fund a program that will help one third of unhoused Pasadenans off the street and into the housing and drug treatment they need. ⁴
- The **Pasadena Unified School District** received \$1.76 million to support youth programming throughout the Pasadena Unified School District.⁵

Far from addressing homelessness and drug use, Prop 36 would worsen drug use in Los Angeles by stripping funding from successful treatment programs and sending more people to jail and prison. Overdoses in **California prisons have doubled** in recent years, and people leaving jail and prison are up to **129 times more likely to overdose.**⁶

Prop 36 will also worsen California’s homelessness crisis.⁷ People who have spent time in jail or prison are **10 times more likely to be homeless**, and people who are unhoused are **11 times more likely to be arrested** than people who have a stable home.⁸

Finally, Prop 36 would cost taxpayers an **additional \$5 billion dollars** every year on top of the **\$27 billion already spent annually on jails, prisons, and court costs.**⁹ These billions would take us further from addressing drug use and homelessness.

We urge the committee to vote “NO” to oppose this motion. Vera’s experts and researchers would be glad to provide more information or answer questions—please feel free to contact me at mparris@vera.org.

Sincerely,

M. Parris

Michelle Parris
Program Director
Vera California

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- ¹ Californians for Safety and Justice (CSJ), Mass Incarceration Ballot Initiative: A New Proposed Ballot Initiative Offers No Treatment, Only Punishment (Oakland, CA: CSJ, 2024), <https://perma.cc/NLA9-9PWS>.
 - ² Vera Institute of Justice, Proposition 36 Risks Cutting Millions in Funding that Helps Thousands of Angelenos (Los Angeles: Vera, 2024), https://vera-advocacy-and-partnerships.s3.amazonaws.com/Vera%20CA_Los%20Angeles%20Prop%2047%20Funding%20Research%20Brief.pdf.
 - ³ Patricia O’Driscoll and Albert Chen, *Pasadena/Altadena “Vision 20/20” Reintegration Project, Board of State & Community Corrections (BSCC) Proposition 47 Grant Program, Two-Year Preliminary Evaluation Report*, (Pasadena, CA: Public Works, Inc., 2019), <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Pasadena-Police-Department.pdf>.
 - ⁴ Whitney Harrison, *Prop 47 Grant Program, Local Evaluation Plan*, (Pasadena, CA: City of Pasadena Public Health Department, 2023), <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Pasadena-Local-Evaluation-Plan.pdf>.
 - ⁵ Keith Calayag, “Pasadena Health Director Sees Promising Results in City’s Outreach Response Team Initiatives Addressing Homelessness,” Pasadena NOW, September 2, 2023, <https://pasadenanow.com/main/pasadena-health-director-sees-promising-results-in-citys-outreach-response-team-initiatives-addressing-homelessness>; and Patricia O’Driscoll, Lisa Evans Powell, and Albert Chen, *Pasadena/Altadena “Vision 20/20” Reintegration Project, California Board of State & Community Corrections (BSCC) Proposition 47 Grant Program Cohort 1, Final Local Evaluation Report, September 30, 2021* (Pasadena, CA: Public Works, Inc., 2021), <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Pasadena-Police-Dept-Cohort-1-final-report.pdf>.
 - ⁶ Don Thompson, “California Prison Drug Overdoses Surge Again After Early Treatment Success,” LAist, February 17, 2024, <https://laist.com/news/health/california-prison-drug-overdoses-surge-again-after-early-treatment-success>; and Ingrid A. Binswanger, Marc F. Stern, Richard A. Deyo, et al., “Release from Prison—A High Risk of Death for Former Inmates,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 356, no. 2 (2007), 157–65, 161, <https://perma.cc/L49X-7MZ7>. Researchers agree that people leaving incarceration have a significantly higher risk of overdose death, but estimates of likelihood differ by study.

- ⁷ National Institute of Justice, “Five Things About Deterrence,” June 5, 2016, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-deterrence>.
- ⁸ Lucius Couloute, “Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among Formerly Incarcerated People,” Prison Policy Initiative, August 2018, <http://perma.cc/2JST-EEJC>; and National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (NHLCP), *Housing Not Handcuffs 2019: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities* (Washington, DC: NHLCP, 2019), <https://perma.cc/NT7W-TDTH>.
- ⁹ Californians for Safety and Justice (CSJ), *Mass Incarceration Ballot Initiative: A New Proposed Ballot Initiative Offers No Treatment, Only Punishment* (Oakland, CA: CSJ, 2024), <https://perma.cc/NLA9-QPWS>