

## **New Report Shows Proposition 47 Successfully Reducing Incarceration and Increasing Investments in Crime Prevention, Community Health**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2017

### CONTACT

Will Matthews, Californians for Safety and Justice, (909) 261-1398; [will@safeandjust.org](mailto:will@safeandjust.org)

OAKLAND, Calif. – Proposition 47, passed overwhelmingly by California voters in 2014, is working as intended, according to a new report released Wednesday by Californians for Safety and Justice.

According to the report, which analyzes the first two years of the initiative's implementation, thousands of Californians have been given a second chance by reducing six low-level, non-violent offenses from felonies to misdemeanors. As a result, California has saved tens of millions of taxpayer dollars in prison spending, money that is being reallocated to community-based crime prevention programs, and the state's nonviolent prison and jail populations have shrunk - while maintaining historically low levels of crime.

"Thanks to the voters, California has begun the important process of investing in health solutions for health problems, and moving away from the failed approach of wasting billions of dollars every year on ineffective incarceration that destabilizes vulnerable communities," said Lenore Anderson, executive director of Californians for Safety and Justice and a co-author of Proposition 47. "But rather than rest on the gains we've made, now is the time to double down on criminal justice reform and commit to going further in our efforts to abandon ineffective justice policies that deplete resources and make matters worse."

As a result of Proposition 47, roughly 15,000 fewer people are incarcerated for nonviolent offenses in state prison or county jail, allowing public safety officials to focus more on serious and violent crime, according to the report. Proposition 47 has been a significant factor in helping the state reduce prison overcrowding, a problem that has plagued the state for decades.

Proposition 47 is also helping California address its decades-old problem of failing to adequately invest in drug and mental health treatment programs - which help prevent crime from happening in the first place. More than 60 local agencies have applied for over \$68 million in funding that, as a result of the savings yielded by Proposition 47, are being made available this year to programs aimed at addressing the root causes of crime.

"Prison growth starved opportunities to invest in prevention and resulted in an incarceration or nothing approach to public safety," said Thomas Hoffman, retired director of the Division of Adult Parole Operations for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. "Proposition 47 is allowing us to recognize the importance of new safety solutions that expand prevention, rehabilitation and community health."

A copy of the report is available online [here](#)