



CALIFORNIA STATE
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
916/327-7500



REGIONAL COUNCIL OF RURAL
COUNTIES
916/447-4806



URBAN COUNTIES
CAUCUS
916/327-7531

June 19, 2007

TO: The Honorable Jose Solorio, Member of the Assembly
The Honorable James Tilton, Secretary, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

FROM: Elizabeth Howard, Legislative Representative, California State Association of Counties
Paul Smith, Vice President of Legislative Affairs, Regional Council of Rural Counties
Casey Kaneko, Executive Director, Urban Counties Caucus

RE: **AB 900 (Solorio) – State/Local Partnership and Implementation Issues**

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC), and the Urban Counties Caucus (UCC), we would like to jointly acknowledge your leadership and successful efforts to address overcrowding and high recidivism rates in California's corrections system. The recent passage and signing of AB 900 (Chapter 7, Statutes of 2007) clearly demonstrates the state's commitment to addressing the twin issues of recidivism and overcrowding experienced at the state and local levels. Our organizations are generally supportive of coupling infrastructure investment and rehabilitative elements, as contained in the historic reform measure. As is clearly recognized in AB 900, services at the local level will play an integral role in the ability of individuals to successfully transition from prison to parole and ultimately to becoming productive, responsible citizens.

Counties are sincerely committed to working with key state entities and policymakers to ensure the successful and expeditious implementation of AB 900. As you are aware, nearly a dozen counties are already in discussion with the state to explore possibilities of siting a reentry facility. The language of AB 900 is very flexible, allowing for maximum innovation at the local level. However, there are a number of areas in AB 900 that would benefit from further clarification to assure the best possible footing as counties and the state forge ahead in a significant new enterprise.

We have outlined several implementation issues below and would welcome the opportunity to work jointly with you and your staff to identify the practical application of several key provisions of AB 900 — particularly as it relates to the relationship with local governments and service delivery systems as well as determining responsibility for funding services.

- *Jail bond priority funding (Government Code Sections 15820.907 and 15820.917)*
The CDCR and the Corrections Standards Authority will give preference for jail bond funding to those counties that assist the state in siting reentry facilities or mental health day treatment/crisis centers and to counties who "provide a continuum of care (so) that parolees with mental health and substance abuse needs can continue to receive services at the conclusion of their period of parole."
- *Additional rehabilitation and treatment services for prison inmates and parolees (Penal Code Section 2062)*
CDCR is to develop and implement a plan to obtain additional rehabilitation and treatment services for prison inmates and parolees. The plan must include a strategy to "obtain from local governments and contractors services for parolees needing treatment while in the community and services that can be brought to inmates within prisons."

- Post-release substance abuse services (Penal Code Section 2694)
CDCR must expand substance abuse treatment services in prisons to accommodate at least 4,000 additional inmates and must “expand follow-up treatment services in the community in order to ensure that offenders who participate in substance abuse treatment while incarcerated in prison shall receive necessary follow-up treatment while on parole.”
- Day treatment centers and crisis services for parolees with mental health problems (Penal Code Section 3073)
The Department is authorized to obtain day treatment and to contract for crisis care services for parolees with mental health problems. “The Department shall work with counties to obtain day treatment and crisis care services for parolees with the goal of extending the services upon completion of the offender’s period of parole, if needed.”
- Provision of wrap-around services (Penal Code Section 6272)
The Department is directed to provide programs for inmates and parole violators tailored to the problems these persons face when reentering the community. These services are to include “wrap-around services that provide a continuity of support services between custody and parole.”
- County Representation on California Rehabilitation Oversight Board (C-ROB) (Penal Code Section 6140)
AB 900 mandates the creation of C-ROB and designates composition of the 11-member board. Given that counties in the broadest sense will play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of corrections reform, we are interested in exploring whether a county appointment (either a board of supervisor member or a county administrator) to the board would be appropriate.
- Overall staffing and capacity
AB 900 in its totality proposes many reforms and services for prison inmates and parolees both during parole and after successful program completion. It is important that the State and counties collaborate in planning the implementation of these services to ensure that there is adequate staff to serve inmates, parolees and county residents when they are using overlapping services.

It will take both a coordinated and collaborative effort at all levels of government to ensure accountability and success for our community members who are released from prison and complete parole. For these reasons, we believe it is valuable for all parties that the issues above be discussed and addressed at the front end of AB 900 implementation. We look forward to working with you, CDCR and the many other organizations that will be involved in reforming our state corrections system. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us to discuss these issues. We thank you again for your leadership.

cc: The Honorable Don Perata, President Pro Tempore, California State Senate
The Honorable Dick Ackerman, Republican Leader, California State Senate
The Honorable Mike Machado, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 4
The Honorable Gloria Romero, Chair, Senate Public Safety Committee
The Honorable Fabian Nunez, Speaker, California State Assembly
The Honorable Michael Villines, Republican Leader, California State Assembly
The Honorable Juan Arambula, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4