

ERIN HANNIGAN

District 1, (707) 553-5363

MONICA BROWN

District 2, Vice-Chair, (707) 784-3031

WANDA WILLIAMS

District 3, Chair Pro-Tem (707) 784-6136

JOHN M. VASQUEZ

District 4, Chair, (707) 784-6129

MITCH MASHBURN

District 5, (707) 784-6030

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**SOLANO
COUNTY****BILL EMLÉN**

County Administrator

(707) 784-6100

675 Texas Street, Suite 6500

Fairfield, CA 94533-6342

Fax (707) 784-6665

www.solanocounty.com

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O St., Ste. 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: REQUEST TO VETO - AB 505 (Ting) The Office of Youth and Community Restoration

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I write to respectfully request your veto on AB 505, which would upend key elements of the important reforms you championed as part of the realignment of juvenile justice to counties. More specifically, AB 505 would take necessary authority and integral funding away from county probation departments. The bill creates unnecessary and compounding barriers in sub-committee, plan approval, and funding allocation processes, all of which will negatively affect the ability of counties to provide integral direct service delivery to young adults aged 18-25.

Despite numerous counties, including Solano County, continually voicing their concerns, no amendments to alleviate the issues they raised were taken throughout the legislative process. As the bill stands, there is further ambiguity regarding the delinking of authority and funding from the county entities who continue to bear responsibility for the important and necessary work associated with carrying out DJJ realignment. We have already witnessed how ambiguity in many of the changes associated with this policy shift has resulted in litigation intended to impede progress. AB 505 will certainly end with further delays. Also, by requiring new elements within the plan, as well as requiring most of the local subcommittee to approve the plan, AB 505 sets up processes that are unnecessary and do not help advance the direct services Solano County is focused on providing.

The provisions in the bill, particularly the changes in Section 4, hamstring counties by revoking decision making authority and withholding necessary funding for the direct service delivery to young adults aged 18-25 who are now served by counties following the closure of the state Division of Juvenile Justice a few months ago. These young people need a whole host of supports and services to ensure successful reintegration into their communities. These supports and services include behavioral health, substance use disorder services, physical health, supportive and/or transitional housing, just to name a few.

The changes proposed in AB 505 cannot be viewed in a silo due to their intersecting and compounding effect on one another. In addition to the detrimental effect this will have on this most high-need population whom the state has very recently determined are best served by the trauma-informed wrap-around service delivery model only county probation can provide, there will be downward fiscal, resources, and staffing pressures also negatively affecting the other juvenile populations traditionally served by county probation.

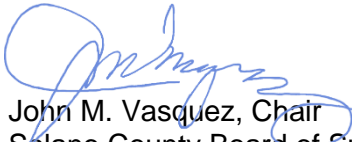
This bill proposes a counterintuitive wrong turn on the pathway to real and collaborative reform of the juvenile probation system. Extensive planning, collaboration and groundwork has been undertaken to make the changes necessary to transition all remaining juvenile probation service delivery from the

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state to the counties. This legislative decision was designed and debated which set significant changes in motion to Solano County's local workforce, infrastructure, and court processes. All these changes are impacting the county's ability to successfully rehabilitate youth already in their system and the safety of the institutions and community. Solano County is deeply concerned by this bill's approach to redirect decision making authority back to a state bureaucracy so soon after the fully informed decision to take the authority away from the state and impart it to the counties was made as in the best interest of the juveniles and young adults served and the communities to which they were returning. The changes put forth in this bill will result in significant disruption to Solano County's juvenile justice system and the youth they serve after significant commitments to embrace the historic change were recently enacted. Now is not the time to place more barriers in the path of success resulting in taking us backwards.

For these reasons, Solano County must remain in opposition to AB 505, and respectfully request that you veto this measure.

Sincerely,



John M. Vasquez, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

The Honorable Bill Dodd, Senator
The Honorable Lori D. Wilson, Assemblymember
The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors
Christina Bouma, Secretary of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Governor
Jessica Devencenzi, Chief Deputy of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Governor
Christopher Hansen, Chief Probation Officer, Solano County
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners