



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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December 5, 2023

The Honorable Corey Jackson
Member of the Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: AB 702 (Jackson) – Local Government Financing: Juvenile Justice - OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Jackson:

On behalf of the County of Mendocino, I write to express our respectful opposition to AB 702, your measure that would make fundamental changes to the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). These changes would be detrimental to probation departments' ability to coordinate the delivery of services and supports to youth in our communities, resulting in system fragmentation and diminished outcome improvements for and advancement of young people with whom they engage on a daily basis.

AB 702 proposes to enact three major changes to the funding and coordination of local juvenile justice system activities. It would redirect Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) funds, change the designated chair and overall composition of local Juvenile Justice Coordinating Councils (JJCC), and recast various elements of required multiagency juvenile justice plans. This measure largely mirrors previous legislative efforts – AB 1007 (Jones-Sawyer, 2020) and SB 493 (Bradford, 2021).

AB 702 proposes to require redirection of nearly every dollar of JJCPA funds, which today are – in many instances – dedicated to staffing and personnel costs that make up the backbone of our juvenile probation departments. These expenditures have been and continue to be wholly eligible and lawful under JJCPA. JJCPA funding is vital to counties' delivery of a continuum of robust, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services that support youth at various points along the juvenile justice system – from the earliest stages of vulnerability to system involvement. In many instances, JJCPA funds are dedicated to staffing and personnel costs that serve as the foundation of our juvenile probation departments. These resources support the full array of local responsibilities for system-involved youth, up to and including counties' diligent and ongoing implementation of SB 823 (2020) that shifted care, treatment, and custody of youth and young adults who previously were eligible for placement at one of the state's Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities. Additionally, we would reiterate the constitutional concerns associated with the requirement to redirect JJCPA resources, given that this funding resides within the 2011 fiscal structure that is constitutionally protected under the provisions of Proposition 30 (2012).

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As for the changes to the JJCC, under current law, the chief probation officer in each county serves as chair, a model that recognizes the important role of probation as a connector of services and community organizations in service to the youth in need of treatment and support. The balance of committee members brings a diverse set of experiences and perspectives to the important work of JJCC who work together to coordinate and plan for the safety and rehabilitation of youth locally. By removing the probation chief as the chair of the JJCC, as proposed in AB 702, counties generally and probation more specifically would hold the responsibility and liability for serving system-involved youth without the authority to provide leadership, guidance, and coordination of local activities.

In smaller counties, including Mendocino County, probation agencies operate where there are no or very limited community-based organizations, and probation staff are tasked with providing and facilitating treatment programs on behalf of the courts and for the benefit of youth. In addition, many counties experience challenges in seating a full JJCC, particularly in recruiting community members and formerly justice-involved individuals to serve, and this legislation would create considerable obstacles rather than opportunities due to its specificity regarding JJCC composition.

For these reasons, Mendocino County believes that the approach in AB 702 would be detrimental to our collective efforts of building and sustaining a responsive and locally tailored set of services to address the needs of young people in our community. We therefore join CSAC and RCRC and respectfully oppose AB 702. Thank you for considering our position.

Sincerely,



Glenn McGourty, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members and Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee