

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Governor's Proposal to Reform Community Corrections Performance Incentive Program (SB 678, 2009)

Dear Senator Wiener and Assembly Member Gabriel,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge your support for proposed changes to the SB 678 program currently before the Legislature for consideration as part of the 2025-26 state budget.

SB 678 is a landmark policy that established, for the first time, a state funding source for adult probation to invest in evidence-based supervision and treatment interventions to reduce probation admissions to state prison. It has successfully decreased reliance on incarceration in California and saved taxpayers over a billion dollars in state prison costs. Further, it has improved rehabilitation efforts without increasing crime rates. Probation success under SB 678 was the foundation for smart criminal justice reforms centered on reducing state prison admissions while ensuring accountability through community supervision and alternatives to incarceration. Statewide, Felony Probation admissions to prison have decreased from nearly 8% at the outset of the program to 2.5% in 2024.

Last year's state budget included legislative intent language to review the allocation methodology for the SB 678 grant program in line with the goal of providing sustainable funding for improved, evidence-based probation supervision practices and capacities that will improve public safety outcomes.

The Governor's January budget proposes to update the methodology for calculating incentive payments to counties with the intent to increase the performance-based incentive nature of the funding and reduce variability in the prior methodology. After careful consideration, Kern supports the Administration's proposed changes to the formula. While the changes will reduce the 2025-26 allocation by more than \$10 million compared to the current statutory framework, the proposed changes to the formula strike a delicate balance between enhancing stability through performance maintenance payments and encouraging further reductions in prison admissions where appropriate through refreshed performance incentive payments.

Probation departments need the additional stability proposed for this critical program in order to continue the success that not only improves public safety but results in significant savings for the state in prison and parole costs.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LP' or similar initials, with a stylized, cursive flourish extending to the right.

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 5
 Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6
 Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
 Jith Meganathan, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
 Joe Stephenshaw, Director, Department of Finance
 Amy Jarvis, Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange