

May 13, 2019

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
State Capitol – Room 3173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: AB 901 (Gipson) Juveniles. – Oppose

Dear Assemblymember Gipson:

On behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, we regretfully write in opposition to Assembly Bill 901, which would only authorize a probation department to render services to those persons in the community who are on probation and subject to supervision under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court system.

Probation works in partnership with community and government partners across the state to divert youth who are engaging in behavior that places them at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. We support youth and their families by providing intervention and services that keep them from entering our justice system. The success of our work and partnerships over the last decade is evident in the reduction in the overall juvenile probation population and subsequent significant drop in our juvenile institution populations. For example, of the 71,000 referrals to probation in 2018, over 67% were diverted. Further, juvenile detention rates are down 60% since 2007 and continue to decline.

Monterey County strongly believes in the efficacy of diversion work and base our efforts to ensure the services we provide are evidenced-based, avoid net-widening which is counter to our diversion work, and ultimately serve to reduce the number of youth in our justice system. The success of our work is evidenced by the significant decline in caseloads across the state. It is also important to note that this measure fails to recognize that not all counties are equally resourced with community based agencies. As such, this bill would eliminate the ability of probation in those jurisdictions, and throughout the state, from providing programs to youth in the community who could benefit from skills-based programs, community and family supports, and programs that help build pro-social networks.

For the reasons stated above, Monterey County opposes AB 901.

Sincerely,

John M. Phillips
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: Senator Bill Monning
Senator Anna Caballero
Assemblymember Mark Stone
Assemblymember Robert Rivas
California State Association of Counties