

January 11, 2005 (Updated February 7, 2005)

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED FY 05-06 BUDGET SLASHES CRIME PREVENTION FUNDS WHILE RESTORING PROBATION TANF FUNDS. After-School, School Safety Grants are proposed at or near prior-year levels.

The Governor's Budget for FY 05/06 was released on January 10th—with some big changes proposed for juvenile justice funding.

Big Cut proposed for the Schiff Cardenas Crime Prevention Act

For youth crime prevention advocates, the Governor's spending package is a good news/bad news blend. His proposal would give back to probation departments the \$200 million in TANF probation dollars taken out of last year's budget—there would not be another general fund supplement to probation under the current plan. But at the same time, the Governor proposes to dismantle the Schiff Cardenas Crime Prevention Act. First, he would cut \$75 million of the annual \$100 million appropriation. Then, he would send the remaining \$25 million to the Board of Corrections for distribution to counties, under terms not described in the budget proposal.

Meanwhile, Schwarzenegger's proposal preserves the \$100 million in COPS funding to local law enforcement agencies; these funds are still linked to the Schiff Cardenas Crime Prevention Act by a legislative formula— a formula that would have to be broken the Legislature in order to implement the Schiff Cardenas cuts proposed by the Governor.

This proposed cut in the CPA would effectively eliminate a broad safety net of juvenile crime prevention and treatment programs throughout California. These funds now support county-level mental health, gang outreach, drug treatment and probation supervision programs, as well as specialized programs for girls in the justice system. During the life of the Crime Prevention Act (since 2000), violent youth crime rates have declined to new lows. For example, between 1999 (the year before the CPA) and 2003 (latest data year available), the population-adjusted rate of juvenile arrests for violent crime has declined by 30 percent—better than the comparable figure for adult violent arrests (down 7 percent for the same period).

CYA lawsuit costs, Corrections Reorganization costs: not in this Budget Proposal

Meanwhile, on February 1 the Administration signed a new accord with the Prison Law Office in litigation against the Youth Authority. This new agreement requires the Youth and Adult Corrections Agency (YACA) to produce new plans to transform CYA, from a youth prison to a therapeutic environment. According to the terms of the settlement, YA must end punitive practices like 23 hour lockdown and must come up with a design for smaller facilities and units, based on national models like the Missouri youth corrections system. The Governor hints, in his budget "Highlights" document, that funds "saved" from the Crime Prevention Act might be applied to broader juvenile justice reforms, like the transformation of the Youth Authority. But the Governor's January Budget makes no financial commitment to juvenile justice reform, and in fact is silent on the costs of

implementing the settlement agreement in the Prison Law Office case. These budget questions are likely to be addressed by the Administration in the May Budget Revision.

Another development not addressed in the January Budget is the Governor's Corrections Reorganization Plan. This Plan is a revision of the "Independent Review Panel" (Deukmejian Report) submitted to the Governor near the end of last year. The Plan would overhaul the management of the Department of Corrections—by centralizing many operations in offices under the immediate control of the Secretary of a renamed Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and by making prisons and wardens more accountable to a central management structure. It would also merge many functions of CYA and CDC into new offices and divisions having responsibility for both youth and adult corrections. This revised Reorganization plan has just been reviewed by the Little Hoover Commission and will next go to the Legislature for an "all or nothing" vote. Though one objective of the new Plan is to save money in the long run, by consolidating redundant activities and operations, there will be significant front-end implementation costs. These costs are not factored in to the Governor's January Budget Proposal.

After School and School Safety Programs

The After School Education and Safety Act is proposed for FY 05/06 funding at a level of \$ 121.5 million—the same as last year. This funding level is locked in by the terms of Proposition 49—the after school Initiative sponsored by Arnold Schwarzenegger before he became Governor. The Governor proposes to sustain school safety programs at a level of about \$107 million for FY 05/06. This includes \$ 91 million for the basic school safety/violence prevention grants program, plus an additional \$ 16.3 million related, smaller programs that were merged last year into a new School Safety Competitive Block Grant (SSCBG) administered through the Department of Education.