

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 109.

California's correctional system has to change, and this bill is a bold move in the right direction. For too long, the State's prison system has been a revolving door for lower-level offenders and parole violators who are released within months—often before they are even transferred out of a reception center. Cycling these offenders through state prisons wastes money, aggravates crowded conditions, thwarts rehabilitation, and impedes local law enforcement supervision.

Under this bill, the State will continue to incarcerate offenders who commit serious, violent, or sexual crimes; but counties will supervise, imprison, and rehabilitate lower-level offenders.

By its terms, Assembly Bill 109 will not go into effect until the creation of a community corrections grant program and an appropriation of funding.

I will not sign any legislation that would seek to implement this measure without the necessary funding. In this regard, I intend to work closely with, and consult, police chiefs, sheriffs, chief probation officers, district attorneys and representatives of the counties and courts to ensure that any funding bill which makes Assembly Bill 109 operative is sufficient to protect public safety.

Regrettably, the measure that would provide stable and constitutionally protected funding for public safety has not yet passed the Legislature. In the coming weeks, and for as long as it takes, I will vigorously pursue my plan to balance the State's budget and prevent reductions to public safety through a constitutional guarantee. I will also continue to partner with counties and law enforcement on this important effort.

Sincerely,

Edmund G. Brown Jr.