



Proposition 47 Regional Meetings

Notable Quotations from Public Participants

October 28, 2015 in Oakland, CA

“My name is Jasmine Canfield. I am a substance use counselor at Heart of Oakland. I work with people who have substance abuse issues. Primarily opiate addiction. I see first-hand how Prop 47 has changed people’s lives. I also have seen how drug addiction can affect people’s lives in a negative way and it’s not—I don’t think people should be judged based off of the disease of addiction. I think that Prop 47 has definitely helped people remove the barriers that are there. People can find jobs. Before, it was hopeless. I know—I have a client that I work with who was able to find work as a butcher. For two weeks he was able to do that job... did it well. They ran his background check—he was fired. Now with Prop 47 he is able to have a chance. So I feel that a wraparound services definitely is something that is needed. Also the funding for substance use is also necessary as well.” (Oakland)



“Good evening. My name is James Davis Jr. and I’m a substance abuse counselor at Heart of Oakland, and I’ve been a substance abuse counselor for the past eight years. I’m also a recovering addict and ex-felon. With 10 to 15 years of my life I went in and out of prisons, and it wasn’t until the courts allowed me access to treatment that I was able to finally put pieces of my life back together and I stand here before you today to tell you that treatment works and I think that the funds should be allocated to treatment.” (Oakland)

“My name is Daniel Cohen and I am a licensed clinical social worker and I’m a consultant in the Alameda County System of Care for Behavioral Healthcare Services, so I work with the Public Department of Health, currently working with the East Bay Community Law Center, Bay Area Community Services and building opportunity for self-sufficiency. So I have been working in the mental health system for 15 years and I have quite a breadth of experience and I work, you know, on the front lines every day in all of these different programs. What I came here to speak about briefly is the lack of community services that there are for folks with severe and persistent mental illness, that are preventative services for incarceration. I read progress notes and documentation for the treatment that is provided in the prisons every day for my work. The care that is provided in prison is extremely superficial. What we’re talking about is a psychiatrist coming to the bars and asking whether somebody wants medications. You know, when somebody is isolated in a cell, really, you know, in a traumatic situation, it is very difficult to accept and receive services in that kind of context. So what I’m here to argue is for—I want to support the priority of funding community-based programs. Our response in the community mental health system to try to prevent incarceration is referring people who are in great need to programs like the Forensic Act Team, to programs like the advocacy organizations that are out there, and to other mental health programs that intensive types of services. We are constantly being denied access to those services because they are just not funded well enough and there just is not enough capacity in them. So I’m here just to argue for that as a priority and to argue against any type of expansion in, you know, for mental health services within the prisons. We need to prevent incarceration not provide treatment on top of it.” (Oakland)





“My name is Reverend Davina Davis Howard and I’m a leader at Oakland Community Organizations—a Federation of People California. We also have Federations in both Bakersfield and San Bernardino for the ladies over here. You probably know some of our leaders. Joey Williams might be one you might now. Anyway I want to say when you let the grants for this program I think that specifically the language says you have to let them to public agencies. I think you need to require that those public agencies have partnerships with community-based programs because nine times out of 10 a lot of public agencies do not hire the formerly incarcerated or those in recovery and all of the folks who need to be at the table and actually doing the work to help this population be the folks that they want to be. So I think that you should require that they have a partnership with community-based organizations that they themselves have involved in the treatment, in the program of formerly incarcerated, those in recovery, those who have mental health issues themselves, that those who are being serviced are part of the treatment process. And so I think that—I want to be very specific and I’ll say it again because I believe that repetition is the key to marketing—that you can’t just let the money into public agencies. As much as I love them and I believe in public services, they need to be partnered with community groups. They need to be partnered with community groups who know how to service these people for real. So again, when you are coming up with the way to let these grants, I know you have to put them out to public agencies, but those public agencies should have to provide a plan, a partnership with the community.” (Oakland)

“Good evening and thank you for being here to share information and take public comment. **My name is Pasha Jaqueline Ducart** and I serve as the minister for Baker Action at the parishioner church of Oakland and we look forward to the next six opportunities to bring more people to share our thoughts. I’m a retired military officer, where I served for 21 years as a mental health officer. I was a drug and alcohol officer. Once I got out of the military I worked in the state of Alaska with individuals who live in the bush who had been violated sexually and mentally. I also worked in the probation department, and I worked on the inside the woman’s prison in Dublin. And what my lived experience tells me is that all those things were wonderful. But my claim to fame is being the oldest in a family of five. My brother spent 15 years down in a Texas prison. And when he came out all the money went to support my family to support my brother. So this is what my lived experience tells me. Not theory, but lived experiences. That when people come out of prison—human beings come out of prison— they need opportunities that are immediate, that are reliable. Programs that are tested, that have proven, positive outcomes to make a change. Not the shell game of people who don’t know what they are doing. They need to have programs that reunify them with their children and their families; they need to be able to reestablish legal documents like their drivers licenses; they need mentorship programs; they need job training programs; they need educational programs; they need free access to see their rap sheet; they need legal services and they need someone to establish an advocacy program in the community where you go around and say, ‘oh you employer, look at this person, it’s a human being. He or she or they or girl can do these things;’ to really advocate with employers to hire people who once thrived while they lived inside to get outside to be worthy individuals that they are.” (Oakland).

Emailed Public Comment

“Dear Board of State and Community Corrections,

I am writing to urge you to allocate the monies from Prop. 47 to the purposes for which they were intended: community mental health and treatment programs and diversion programs as well as housing assistance, job training and other re-entry services.

You should not use this money to build more jails or prisons. This is not what we California taxpayers voted for. Please honor the purpose of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Zoë Lidstrom, registered voter
Palo Alto, CA 94306”

January 25, 2016 in Fresno, CA

From J. Stenner: “One of the things that we would like to see is programs that are not requiring incarceration... programs that don’t require incarceration, programs that address housing, programs that just address—that address the whole concept of recidivism without locking people up.” (Fresno)



Name inaudible: “Any kind of substance abuse treatment as long as it is non-coercive. If you make someone go to treatment it is not going to work. So as long as it is treatment on demand and not coerced, I would advocate for that.” (Fresno)

Name inaudible: “From my own personal experience, the prevention and intervention programs are very beneficial . . . if you want to stop recidivism and people going back, there’s got to be more available for them to get some type of training to do something productive.” (Fresno)

January 26, 2016 in San Bernardino, CA

“Good evening. My name is Bishop Phillip Powell. I am the senior pastor at the Center Highland Church and the President of the Inland Empire Conservative African American Churches. The IECAAC, as our organization is known as, is an organization whose mission is community self-sufficiency and sustainability in spiritually, education, community development and economic development with faith-based efforts. We, as an organization, have intentionally worked to ensure that Prop 47 become the law in California and advocated to have this meeting tonight. While we thank you for your presence here tonight, we are an org representing over 25 churches in the Inland Empire. We stand strongly to support those of our local and regional statewide allies, and we come tonight to demand and strongly urge that this board will do two things. Number one: to make sure that grassroots funding is intentionally directed to organizations like Time for Change, to expand their services to women and children, as well as housing;



the African American Mental Health Coalition, to provide cultural development, mental health services; Rebound CEC Inc., to provide housing and substance abuse treatment for men; and a host of others that we can help you identify. The second thing we come for tonight is to verify that the executive steering committee reflect the population that it services. African Americans are over 40 percent of the prison population. This board must reflect that reality in order to be equitable. Finally, this is the will of the voters and the only fiscal use possible of this issue that treats people humanity and reduces the chance that people will return to jail or prison. In closing, we want to be fully understood that we can no longer arrest ourselves out of this problem and we believe that evidence-based community programs have been proven to work when properly invested.” (Highland)



“Good evening. My name is Esley Howell. I’m a father, a grandfather and also a Hope leader. Hope is an organization with some issues whose mission is to revitalize the community in which we live, work and worship. We worked very hard to ensure that Prop 47 would become a reality for our communities. We believe that its full implementation is maintained in the right direction seeing that vulnerable populations are fully restored. This means that all will have access to state laws that benefit their quality of life. We go in support from our local, regional, statewide allies to demand and strongly urge this board to direct all funding made available through saving from Prop 47 to community-based mental-health treatment programs, substance-use treatment programs, school-based intervention and diversion programs that are not solely facilitated programs by law enforcement. This is the will of the voters and the only fiscally responsible decision that treats people humanely and reduces the chance people will return to jail or prison. In closing, we want it to be fully understood that we can no longer arrest ourselves out of this problem and believe that community-based programs have been proven to work when properly invested in.” (Highland)

“Good evening. My name is John Wingo and I’m a teacher at San Bernardino High School. I’m here representing myself, but I should tell you that I served at district positions and also at the California Teachers Association in elected positions with such people as Patricia Rucker and others. What I’m not seeing is simple—and I will be filing out an RFA for this—I’d like to see some of this money spent for our, not only San Bernardino, but statewide initiatives for giving students work-based learning opportunities. We’ve set up a tremendous number of career partnership academies, California Partnership Academies, as well as just, you know, trying to stop the school-to-prison pipeline and return it to the school-to-career pipeline, the school-to-college pipeline. We appreciate all the work that Cope has done, all the work that the Center at Kion (??) has done. I have some of their students in my class. And we’re working hard every day to do whatever we can to turn the city of San Bernardino and the county of San Bernardino around. I’m glad to hear that you were in Fresno they are doing something similar there in Porterville. But what we would like really to ask that, if there could be money for our work-based learning. I’m asking for community support so that if my students need to go out and get some on the job experience it puts a tremendous burden on the people in our community, particularly small businesses, even government agencies that my students might one day work at, and there is no money. So I will be putting in that application.” (Highland)



"Hi, my name is Adrienne Kilgore and I'm here to speak from personal experience. I was released four months ago from prison from serving 29 years to life sentence. And I know how important it is to have organizations. In four months with the help of an organization I'm already employed, I have a full school schedule and I know with organizations they will help people stay out of prison and get their life back together and rejoin the right track."

Scott Budnick: "Ms. Kilgore I have a question. Don't worry, I'll keep it very simple since you're an expert here. After 29 years inside, what was the number one thing you needed when you came home?"

Adrienne: "Support and an organization that would help me get my life back on track." (Highland)

"My name is Angela and I am also speaking out of personal experience. I'm in the Time to Change program right now. I've been there for over a year and since then and, well, I used to be homeless. I have three kids. Since then I gained employment. Because of that I see a future. I have my own home now. I have savings and Time to Change has done so much for me. Before I met—I didn't see past welfare before but now I know I can live on my own and I know I can do this, you know. So now I'm a role model for my three children. Thank you."

Scott Budnick: "Angela, question: is Time for Change a residential program?"

Angela: "It is a homeless shelter for women and children. You start out in the shelter and you move up to Homes of Hope, where you get your apartment and it's great." (Highland)



"Good evening. My name is Pastor Tolbert. I'm a pastor of Life Center Church in San Bernardino. I'm also a board member of Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement and a community leader with ICUC. As a faith leader in the community we are actively making sure that those who are most vulnerable receive services, and trying to advocate for those that are most vulnerable, so I stand tonight to ask three things. Three things... and that is the dollars that are allocated for this Prop 47 go, one to individuals so they can receive services they need to be with their families. Instead of having services where they're going to be taken away from their families or they're going to be incarcerated, to have services where they reach the services, where they can have access to the services. Number 2, as it's been stated but I will reiterate, to the community organizations that are going to work. And these community organizations are actually culturally sensitive and I think that they have to be incentivized. They have to be incentivized for them to be, for them to work. Thirdly, I'd like to see the money allocated for individuals to support in gaining all the areas you have already talked about—housing, education. Lastly, I think it's critical that we prioritize services and treatment programs that don't



require incarceration, that don't require the individual to be incarcerated to receive them. And, although it's important that those who are incarcerated receive services and receive mental health and health in jails and community, at the same time we have to address challenges facing people who are poor, who are marginalized, that are less fortunate, that are vulnerable. And if we funded though government agencies, if it somehow works out to where the funding is first to law enforcement agencies as opposed to community-based organizations then what's going to happen, what's going to happen and what I believe that, that's first and the care of the community of individuals comes secondary, last. So if we can do this, if we can put it in those three areas, it will reduce the rate of recidivism, it will reduce the opportunity for those who are vulnerable and it will allow them to be at home with their family while they are receiving this help and the community-based organizations can definitely provide a one-on-one hands-on touch with the individual."



Scott Budnick: "Pastor, I have one question for you. I promise I'm not going to do this after everybody. So, I spend an awful amount of time in prisons, many in this area. Many in this area, so I hope these incredible churches are going inside NORCO, CRC, CIN, and being of service for those inside. What do we do—and I appreciate the connection to family, your remarks are brilliant—what do we do when someone inside says, 'Scott, I can't go home due to the homies are still kicking it right there. I need a fresh start. That's not where I can go.'" In those cases, what would you do?"



Pastor: "In those cases I would partner with a community-based organization that becomes their family. That can become what they need. The respected community-based organizations here—Cope, ICUC, Time for Change—the reason that they have been successful in this area is because there have been individuals in this area who have come home and they didn't have anybody to go home to, but that community-based organization becomes their family. That's why it's important that the money gets down to the grass roots."

Scott Budnick: "Thanks, Pastor. I appreciate that." (Highland)

"Hi, I'm Rosie Flores. I am with California Partnership and Riverside All of Us or None. And I went through the Starting Over Program. I am formerly incarcerated; I've done about 13 years inside. And went through the California Youth Authority all of my teenage years. And my problem was that I could not stop getting high. I had no family, I was kind of by myself, no support when I got out and I was going to rehab and I was going to do it different that time and it didn't end up working out. I finally stopped when there was a prison proposal back in the day when you could go to rehab and go to sober living for three months—rehab in three months and sober living out three months and then you find a job and whatever and that sucks. And I found it difficult this time. I'm four and a half months clean and sober. I went to the Starting Over Program for a year voluntarily and I did three months in because I wanted something different for me and my child—I'm a single parent. I did the Starting Over Program



for a year voluntarily and there's not enough programs like that. It's a transitional housing but I did three meetings a week, probably more. And I learned so much being there, but there's not enough of those. That one's in Corona.

But I can tell you, I've been from San Bernardino to Riverside, and there's not enough of those programs. And so my tiny priority, my ask is that, one, there should be more sober livings, connected, contracted, whatever with AB 109, you know, people coming out of prisons and jails, getting, you know, taking whatever deal they are going to get to go into sober living. There's not enough sober living to take them. There are people waiting in jails to get a bed because there is nowhere to go, you know, and that sucks. That sucks! They can't be out with their families, with their

kids, whatever it is. And there's some people out there who really need it, and more than that, they really want it. And they can't get it so they come out, let's say they come out of prison and they don't have nowhere to go. For me, I had nowhere to go. I had to move from Fontana to Corona. I had to leave my area because there were too many people. I needed to find somewhere to live."

Scott Budnick: "Can I ask you a quick question?"

Rosie "yes"

Scott Budnick: "What happened four and a half years ago that was different? That worked for you?"

Rosie: "I was homeless. I was homeless and I had a four year old boy who, a little responsibility that I didn't want to see get in the system like I was in the system. And I was tired of my, my arms was tired and I was tired and I didn't want to go back to prison again."

Scott Budnick: "And at that moment a program became available?"

Rosie: "Yes, uh no, I, I got, I was put in a program and, thankfully, Starting Over let me in their program and I got to go there. And so my thing is, what I'm saying is people coming out of prison, they don't have housing. I just finished a year-long program with Woman's Foundation of California, FPI—are you familiar? With Woman's Policy Institute? Ok, and I was part of the criminal justice team and we worked on policy for Riverside County, a housing policy. To change language or to make a policy to get rid of the whole, oh my god what is called? You know, fair housing. Ok, so like, when you go to ask for an apartment and they run a background check and if you, and if you have a criminal history, you cannot get an apartment because—"

Scott Budnick: "I got to, I have to cut you off because if I give you four minutes, everyone has to have four minutes, but your point is incredibly well taken. I've taken notes, and, trust me, I get it. Amen. Thank you."

Rosie: "We need housing." (Highland)



January 27, 2016 in Los Angeles, CA

From Osuna: “We are interested in making sure that the savings from this measure go where they are supposed to go. . . make sure the funding goes to those [community service providers] who have been doing the work and proven themselves . . .” (Los Angeles)



From Gale: “If you talk to clinicians, the gold standard would be integrated care, where the same team gives mental health treatment and substance abuse treatment. But you can’t find it. . . What doctors tell us to do isn’t available. Build it. And I understand that licensing for substance abuse treatment and licensing from mental health treatment has its obstacles, let’s solve those impediments so that we can bring facilities together where people with mental illness with co-occurring disorders can get the treatment they need. . . We keep thinking we put the substance-abuse treatment in this silo and the mental health treatment in that silo, and it doesn’t work. And [then] people have to navigate a very fragmented, complex system.” (Los Angeles)

From Farris: “We are here to echo what we have heard already many people have said, and what we hope more people will say, is that Prop 47 savings should go to services in communities and not to services in jail, which are important but already funded through various streams. When California voters passed Prop 47, they sent a clear message that it’s time to lessen and not deepen people’s involvement in the criminal justice system. And as such, we hope that funds will be invested in the community to support reentry, reduce recidivism, prevent future involvement in the criminal justice system. These include concurrent mental health care and drug use treatment, job training and housing.” (Los Angeles)

From Lopez: “When people suffering from mental illness are punished instead of treated, society pays the price. We pay the price financially. We’ve seen the reports that highlight the millions of dollars that will be saved if there was an alternative to incarceration for the mentally ill. But more importantly we pay the price as our communities are fragmented and fellow human beings are no longer viewed as people but as numbers to be locked away. We ask you to invest the savings from Prop 47 into community based mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and diversion programs; not to programs run by law enforcement.” (Los Angeles)



From Kornegay: “What we want is that this funding not be given to the agencies that have the most elaborate construction or most articulate delivery but the ones that are the most effective... The [community] organizations must be able to make every dollar count. We would like it to be funneled to [community] organizations and agencies that prioritize reentry housing and reentry programs... We would ask that the committee continue to encourage counties to form local partnerships to reduce recidivism and provide alternatives to incarceration by requiring that a percentage of local funding be incorporated into community-based service providers.” (Los Angeles)

From Toney: “We really want to echo the points that people have made before about really prioritizing community-based groups who have proven track records, who have been doing this work, who are able to unequivocally prioritize the needs of people who are seeking these services whether it is mental health services, whether its substance use services and to also really prioritize some the qualities to the degree that some of these organizations have been successful, particularly around employment as a piece of reentry.” (Los Angeles)



From Rabbi Cohen: “There are alternatives to incarceration... Because of the disproportionate way in which African-Americans and Latinos are incarcerated many communities of color in this state are devastated by this high level of incarceration... On the one hand, Prop 47 funds should be going to preventative community-based programs, access to educational and job training problems, community based mental health and drug programs. On the other hand, the funds should go to community-based reentry programs, diversion programs, job training and education.” (Los Angeles)

From Humphrey: “These Prop 47 savings should be spent on community based treatments and services that go and help reduce crime and reduce recidivism. These services include homelessness services such as housing, mental health services, affordable drug treatment to the members of the community, job training, education and also economic investment within our communities.” (Los Angeles)

January 28, 2016 in San Diego, CA

From Cazares: “I am here tonight to advocate for the funding to stay in the communities as much as possible and not in jails. I would really like for us to address the root of the issue, a lot of the issues and why we see the revolving door in criminal justice system so full of the people we serve—and that’s the mental health services and substance abuse services.” (San Diego)

From Macias: “I was able to change my life with the help and support of the people in my community... I think that community-based organizations, grassroots organizations, do good work... I think it is important that community-based organizations are able to access that funding if not directly then through grants that are given to them by the county or the city or the state. The problem with that is that a lot of the money gets wasted on bureaucracy and so the money that could be used for direct services is wasted on executives instead of frontline staff. And so I think the money could be used very wisely if we consider how we can use it directly to support and to provide direct services to the young people that need it most.” (San Diego)



From Vasquez: “We would love to see that these moneys are put to good use... to be able to assist those that were just thrown out in order to alleviate the burden on the state. It is really unfair on the communities and we really want to see that these moneys be put into good use in those communities to help rehabilitate those individuals... One of the main issues that individuals like myself face when we get out is we burned all the bridges we had. We have nowhere to stay. The only places that we know where to stay are not the most suitable or nice places that are going to be conducive to our well-being. And so I think that housing is definitely an issue.” (San Diego)



From Herman: “I think it is very important for people who have been incarcerated, who have been in the SHU, who have had God knows what has happened to them while they are in jail, get the job training they need, as well as mental health and substance abuse services.” (San Diego)

From Rising: “There are a lot of inmates coming. We’re all getting out. The 3 strikes is changing. The juvenile thing just changed. You’ve got guys coming out at 35 years old that don’t know what to do and we can’t go into Job Corp anymore. We need to invest in some sort of program that offers trade schools, that offers us life skills. We need to have some sort of like prerelease. We are just thrown out. We are just thrown out.” (San Diego)

From Bergman: “We are very concerned about where the savings from Prop 47—where that’s going to go and, of course, we want that to come into our community and into treatment and rehab and services for mental illness and services for addictive illness and transitional services. We want that to be in the community; not in jails. We have a dire need for resources in our community. We have long lines for detox for treatment. We have an overdose epidemic that is out of control, not just in our community across the state and nation. Unfortunately, have been spending the money putting people behind bars they are coming to the community. But they are going to come back to a community that doesn’t have the resources that they need to successfully reintegrate into to the community.” (San Diego)



From Valderama: “We really can’t allow these guys to come out with the same mindset that they went in with. We have to treat the cause. If treatment is classified under education, I’m all for it. But we need to treat them whether that’s dual diagnosis or there is mental illness. We have to because when I would get out I would have a grandiose idea that I’m going to get a job and this and that. Then I just go back to my area and I’d be around the same people that approved or encouraged this type of thinking. I am talking about criminal thinking. That’s the culture that I come from. I never committed a crime that I wasn’t either drinking or loaded. I have never been in jail or prison with anybody who didn’t have a substance abuse problem... substance abuse played a huge role. So my recommendation is that we have to have treatment. We have to find out if they have a substance abuse problem, mental illness problem, and treat them. We need preventive care. If we don’t get that for the youth right now, we are going to be repeating the cycle.” (San Diego)