

The BSCC's Prop 47 Responsibilities are Unfolding

On Nov. 4, 2014, California voters approved Proposition 47, which reduced from felonies to misdemeanors the penalties for certain non-serious and non-violent drug and property crimes. <http://vig.cdn.sos.ca.gov/2014/general/pdf/text-of-proposed-laws1.pdf#prop47>

The state savings from reduced incarceration rates is to be used to support truancy prevention, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and victim services. The proposition provides that 65 percent of those savings will go to the Board of State and Community Corrections, which will allocate the funds as grants to the counties for rehabilitative programming and mental health and substance abuse treatment for offenders, as follows:

Govt. code 7559.2 (e) The funding established pursuant to this act shall be used to expand programs for public school pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, victims of crime, and mental health and substance abuse treatment and diversion programs for people in the criminal justice system. These funds shall not be used to supplant existing state or local funds utilized for these purposes.

Govt. code 7599.2 (a)(3) Sixty- five percent to the Board of State and Community Corrections, to administer a grant program to public agencies aimed at supporting mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and diversion programs for people in the criminal justice system, with an emphasis on programs that reduce recidivism of people convicted of less serious crimes, such as those covered by this measure, and those who have substance abuse and mental health problems.

The BSCC is beginning its early planning for carrying out these grant-making responsibilities. Already the BSCC administers state and federal grants for a variety of adult and juvenile rehabilitative and crime-prevention programs.

The state Department of Finance is required to estimate and then calculate the savings over the coming year. Funds will become available in August 2016:

Govt. code 7599.1 (a) On or before July 31, 2016, and on or before July 31 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Director of Finance shall calculate the savings that accrued to the state from the implementation of the act adding this chapter ("this act") during the fiscal year ending June 30, as compared to the fiscal year preceding the enactment of this act. ***

(b) Before August 15, 2016, and before August 15 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Controller shall transfer from the General Fund to the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund the total amount calculated pursuant to subdivision (a).

At future board meetings. the BSCC periodically will discuss its responsibilities under Proposition 47.