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CSAC Responds to PPIC Report Regarding Public Safety Realignment

SACRAMENTO – California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Executive Director Matt Cate has issued the following statement in response to a report presented today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) regarding 2011 Public Safety Realignment. CSAC has worked in partnership with the Brown Administration, the Legislature, and our key local public safety officials to responsibly implement Realignment over the last two years. Under the implementing legislation, AB 109, Counties have taken on responsibility for thousands of low-level offenders who previously would have been under state jurisdiction.

“This is really interesting work by the PPIC. The report tells us that two years down the road, realignment has not caused a wholesale increase in California’s crime rate, and there is no evidence realignment has affected the rate of more serious or violent crimes. However, counties are concerned about the apparent increase in property crimes in the past two years and we need more comprehensive data and analysis to fully understand that and find ways to address it.

“We’ve known for a long time that incarceration is very expensive, and for a lot of offenders it doesn’t effectively prevent criminal behavior in the long run. Under AB 109, counties are using evidence-based programs that help individual offenders with basic housing needs, drug or alcohol treatment, and employment services. We know these programs help offenders, but often the individuals’ needs are great – especially with respect to behavioral health issues – and it takes time to develop local service capacity. California Counties can be extremely effective at delivering these programs and services to more and more offenders with generally very positive results.”

The California State Association of Counties is the voice of California’s 58 counties at the state and federal level.

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