



**PATRICIA C. BATES**  
CHAIR, ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT

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September 9, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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**RE: CORRECTIONS LEGISLATION –EARLY RELEASE**

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

We, the Orange County Board of Supervisors, Orange County District Attorney, Orange County Sheriff, and Orange County Chief Probation Officer, write to advise you of our position on the early release of prisoners, especially the "no parole release" of certain felons, and the proposed reduction of certain felonies to misdemeanors.

We are deeply concerned with the proposed release of serious and violent felons into our communities without parole. Parole has historically protected society from violators of the law and the rights of others to the detriment of public safety. The recommended policy would expose law enforcement agencies to a significantly increased number of criminals now well aware that they will not be held accountable for their actions. We respectfully request that each and every county in California be given no less than a thirty-day (30) notice of the early release of prisoners concurrent with the right to determine if local supervision is warranted.

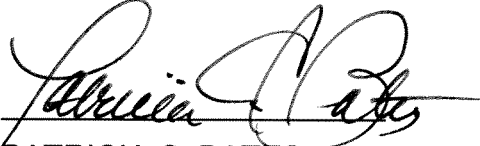
In addition, reducing certain felonies to misdemeanors is cause for much alarm. Felonies, by their nature as significant crimes against the public, provide a lengthened statute of limitations in order to successfully perform the thorough, complex, and time-consuming investigations necessary to convict the perpetrators of serious offenses. Reducing certain crimes to misdemeanors automatically reduces the applicable statute of limitations to one year from the date of offense. This compounds the problem: criminals have more incentive to commit crimes with lesser punishments when law enforcement is handicapped by prohibitively short statutes of limitations. Successfully prosecuting crimes of fraud, conspiracy to defraud, and identity theft will become more difficult, if not impossible.

For the foregoing reasons, and for others, we oppose the early release of prisoners and the reduction of felonies to misdemeanors, including the crimes of fraud, conspiracy to defraud, the receipt and concealment of the proceeds of fraud, and identity theft. To release these individuals without qualification into the affected communities poses an unnecessary risk to our constituents. Furthermore, this proposal merely shifts the costs from the State to local government in a time of declining revenues. Counties, local law enforcement agencies, and local public safety agencies will experience undue hardship compensating for the lack of parole supervision to adequately protect their communities when faced with State abrogation of the responsibility.

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We appreciate your attention to our concerns and welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns in more detail with your office.

Sincerely,



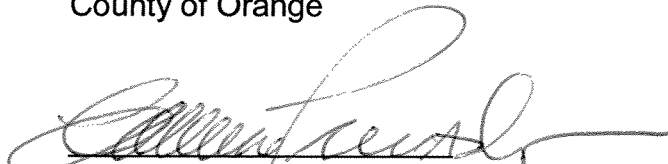
PATRICIA C. BATES  
Chair of the Board  
Supervisor, Fifth District



TONY RACKAUCKAS  
District Attorney  
County of Orange



SANDRA HUTCHENS, Sheriff  
Orange County Sheriff-Coroner



COLLEENE PRECIADO  
Chief Probation Officer  
County of Orange

cc: Members, Orange County State Legislative Delegation  
Members, Orange County Board of Supervisors  
Thomas G. Mauk, County Executive Officer