



SENATE FLOOR ALERT

SB 144 (Mitchell): Criminal fees As Amended May 21, 2019 – OPPOSE

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) oppose Senate Bill 144 unless sustainable funding is provided to back-fill the loss of revenue resulting from eliminating counties' ability to charge criminal justice fees.

Our organizations' opposition is not based on the underlying policy conversation regarding lessening the financial burden associated with fines and fees levied on adults in the criminal justice system. However, we cannot support changes to the system that would directly result in program elimination or service disruptions at the county level.

In order for the elimination of fee authority to be achieved, there must be consideration of the fiscal implications. Removal of specified fees for probation services alone would, for example, likely result in the loss of tens of millions of dollars in probation funding, funding that currently supports vital programs and practices as well as probation positions. The loss of positions would mean impacts on court-related services we provide, an increase in caseload sizes, and impacts on evidence-based program delivery.

We are concerned that the actual breadth of the fiscal impact to counties and courts associated with eliminating specified fee authority is far larger than is being recognized. In the most recent statewide collections report (for FY 2017/18), nearly \$500 million in nondelinquent debt was paid; some significant portion of this revenue would be attributable to the fees proposed for elimination in SB 144. The swift and sweeping nature of SB 144, combined with the great diversity in the manner and location of collection of delinquent court-ordered debt, makes it difficult for counties and courts to provide a clear and accurate assessment of the

implications of SB 144. Given the significant stakes associated with eliminating fee authority, without an accurate understanding of what it would mean to programs and services supported by this revenue, we must respectfully remain opposed.

It is for these reasons that CSAC, CPOC, UCC, and RCRC **OPPOSE** this legislation and respectfully request your NO vote on SB 144. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do hesitate to reach out to Elizabeth Espinosa, UCC Legislative Representative at ehe@hbeadvocacy.com; Jessica Devencenzi, CSAC Legislative Representative at jdevencenzi@counties.org; Paul Smith, RCRC Vice President of Governmental Affairs at psmith@rcrcnet.org and Danielle Sanchez, CPOC Legislative Director at Danielle@wpssgroup.com.