

Peralta Community College District  
Resolution No. 07/08-65 Opposed to the "Runner Initiative"

Whereas, the Runner Initiative, called the Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, is a ballot proposition introduced by Antelope Valley State Senator George Runner, and is currently being circulated for signatures in order to be included on the November, 2008 ballot, and

Whereas, The Runner Initiative would seriously cripple the California budget by spending \$20 billion dollars over forty years on failed programs that make us less safe, and

Whereas, The Runner Initiative directs billions of tax dollars to prisons, probation, and police (one billion dollars in the first year, and half a billion per year thereafter; plus additional unfunded mandates that local and county governments will be forced to pay), and

Whereas, The Runner Initiative would facilitate the prosecution of more youth as adults;

- Facilitate the prosecution of more youth as adults;
- Increase penalties for drug related offenses;
- Increase penalties for offenses alleged to be "gang related";
- Create mandatory criminal background checks for housing subsidy recipients;
- Prohibit bail for undocumented immigrants charged with "gang related" felonies.

Whereas, groups such as the NAACP, the CFT, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and a many other organizations and individuals have formed a coalition to work against this initiative in order to defeat it before it reaches the ballot; therefore

Let it be resolved, that the Peralta Community College Board of Trustees declares its opposition to the Runner Initiative, and

Further resolved, that Peralta Trustees in their individual capacity as elected officials will work with other organizations and individuals to thwart its authors' efforts for it to be placed on the ballot, and if it reaches the ballot, to assure its defeat; and

Finally resolved, that the Board of Trustees encourages all members of the Peralta Community to inform themselves about the Runner Initiative and to use their individual and private resources- but not District resources- advocate for the defeat of the Runner Initiative.

Passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Peralta Community College District held on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2008, by the following called vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

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Secretary of the Board of Trustees  
Peralta Community College District  
Alameda County  
State of California



**ELLA BAKER  
CENTER for  
HUMAN RIGHTS**

ellabakercenter.org

## Help Defeat the Runner Initiative on the November Ballot

The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights opposes the Runner Initiative, a ballot proposition introduced by Senate Republican Caucus Chairperson George Runner. **The Runner Initiative would bankrupt California by spending \$20 billion dollars over forty years on failed programs that make us less safe.**

### **THE RUNNER INITIATIVE WOULD ADD TO THE ALREADY ENORMOUS STATE DEFICIT**

The Runner Initiative directs billions of tax dollars to prisons, probation, and police (one billion dollars in the first year, and half a billion per year thereafter; plus additional unfunded mandates that local and county governments will be forced to pay). In a time of budget crisis, massive cuts in California's already under-funded education and health care programs, recession and rising unemployment, the Runner Initiative would direct vital state resources toward failed programs and policies. California already over-funds a punishment industry that has not produced safe communities, but has instead resulted in overcrowded prisons and an enormous state deficit. **The Runner Initiative would result in even greater costs to the already anemic state budget, making the closure of schools, hospitals and fire stations much more likely.**

### **THE RUNNER INITIATIVE WOULD INVEST IN FAILED POLICIES THAT MAKE US LESS SAFE**

The Runner Initiative would:

- Target youth for adult incarceration, deeming any youth 14 years or older who is convicted of a "gang-related" felony as unfit for trial in a juvenile court or housing in a youth prison.
- Target poor people, forcing recipients of public housing subsidies to submit to annual criminal background checks with the intention of withdrawing the housing subsidies of people with recent criminal convictions.
- Target undocumented immigrants by denying bail to those charged with violent or gang-related crimes and requiring local sheriffs to inform Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of the arrest and charges of people who are undocumented.

The so-called wars on drugs and gangs have not produced safer communities. In fact, "tough on crime" policies, such as those proposed by the Runner Initiative, have worsened a cycle of disinvestment and despair in under-resourced communities and for people of color across California.

"During the 1980s, California embarked on the largest expansion of a state prison system in United States history, increasing the number of incarcerated drug offenders from 2,000 in 1980 to almost 45,000 in 1999—a 25-fold increase in just 20 years."<sup>1</sup> Further increasing penalties for possession of drugs would only further crowd prisons, drain our state's budget and tear families apart.

Increasing penalties for alleged gang membership would cause further disparate and unequal sentencing based more on the race of the individual than actual gang involvement. Applying longer sentences for drug and "gang-related" offenses has proven much less cost effective than investing in drug treatment and prevention programs.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.drugpolicy.org/statebystate/california/>

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**JUSTICE + OPPORTUNITY + PEACE**



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**Opponents of the Runner Initiative**

**Elected Officials:**

Congresswoman Barbara Lee  
State Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero  
Latino Caucus Chair, State Assemblymember Joe Coto  
State Senator Leland Yee, Ph.D., Assistant President pro  
Tempore  
State Assemblyman Sandre Swanson  
San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom  
Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums  
Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates  
Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson  
Tony Thurmond, Richmond City Councilmember  
Oscar De La Torre, President of Santa Monica and Malibu  
School Board

**Individuals**

Dolores Huerta, Co-founder of the United Farm Workers  
Javier Stauring of the Office of Restorative Justice,  
Archdiocese of Los Angeles  
Margaret Gordon, Co-Director, West Oakland  
Environmental Indicators Project

**City Governments**

San Francisco City and County Board of Supervisors  
Berkeley City Council

**Labor Unions**

California Federation of Teachers  
California Faculty Association  
California Teachers Association: Golden Gate Service  
Center Council  
Oakland Education Association  
United Teachers of Los Angeles  
American Federation of Teachers Local 771

**Interfaith Organizations**

California Church IMPACT  
Progressive Christians Uniting  
Progressive Jewish Alliance  
Office of Restorative Justice, Archdiocese of Los Angeles

**Civil Rights and Other Organizations**

California State Chapter NAACP - National Association for  
the Advancement of Colored People  
American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California  
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights  
League of Young Voters  
ColorofChange.org  
American Civil Liberties Union: Berkeley/North East Bay  
Chapter  
Californians United for a Responsible Budget  
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now  
(ACORN): Oakland Chapter  
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now  
(ACORN): Fresno Chapter

East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)  
All of Us or None  
East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC)  
Applied Research Center (ARC)  
National Council on Crime and Delinquency  
Bay View Hunters Point Youth Services  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
Green for All  
Back to Earth  
W. Haywood Burns Institute  
Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition  
San Francisco Youth Commission  
Youth Justice Coalition  
Labor Community Strategy Center  
Community Justice Network for Youth  
Marcus Book Store  
Pico Youth and Family Center  
San Francisco Bay View Newspaper  
PrisonMovement  
Center for Young Women's Development  
Grandmothers of the Light  
Education Not Incarceration  
California Prison Moratorium Project  
Idriss Stelley Foundation  
Homies Unidos  
Education Not Incarceration San Francisco Chapter  
San Francisco Village Voice Community Radio  
Coalition Against Militarism in Our Schools  
Families to Amend California Three Strikes

Charging more youth as adults, subjecting low-income people to mandatory criminal background checks and denying bail to the undocumented will only erode our human rights, civil liberties and constitutional protections, not make us safer. **While we need police in our communities to help protect persons from harm, our justice system and our economy must be geared toward lifting people up, not locking them down.**

### **CALIFORNIA NEEDS COMMUNITY DRIVEN SOLUTIONS**

The authors and supporters of this initiative have stated that they want to make all communities safe, regardless of the racial and the socio-economic status of those communities. Yet neither the Runners, nor Henry T. Nicholas – the Orange County Billionaire who bankrolled the initiative – ever consulted low-income communities and/or people of color communities before drafting this initiative. Had they done so, they would have heard from community members in Oakland, Richmond, Stockton, Fresno, Lancaster and elsewhere that safe communities are communities where people have good jobs, well-lit streets, and access to opportunities. Presumably, the Runners don't want to hear from the community, as the Runner Initiative would prohibit community groups from participating in government bodies that make decisions on how juvenile justice funds should be spent.

We don't need more top-down, failed policies that tear communities apart. California *does* need community driven solutions that build on the strengths of local neighborhoods. **In order to produce safe communities, we must invest in our education system, and we must ensure that people have access to good jobs and effective ways to participate in their communities.**

The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights is a community based organization that promotes peace, justice, and opportunity in California's streets through our cutting-edge campaigns:

- Silence the Violence works with youth and adults to reduce the homicide rate and empower young people to speak as voices for peace in Oakland. This holistic campaign works to decrease violence by increasing opportunities.
- The Green-Collar Jobs Campaign creates opportunities in the green economy for low-income people and people of color. Part social enterprise, part think-tank, and part grassroots advocate, our "green jobs, not jails" mission is to help build a green economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty.
- Our Books Not Bars campaign works to transform our state's juvenile justice system into one that is truly rehabilitative. Campaigning to reform California's abusive and costly youth prison system -- the most expensive and least effective in the nation -- we fight for a future where California lifts its young people up instead of locking them down.

The Ella Baker Center stands with others who have publicly opposed the Runner Initiative, including: State Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero, Latino Caucus Chairperson Assemblyman Joe Coto, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, the California NAACP, the California Federation of Teachers, California Church IMPACT, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums.

**We ask the people of California to reject the Runner Initiative and its attempt to increase funding for failed policies that divide us, and to instead support local efforts to produce a safer, more prosperous state for all Californians.**

For Information Call 510.428.3939x241 or go to [www.defeatrunner.org](http://www.defeatrunner.org)

## **Oppose Budget-Busting Youth-Incarceration Initiative of Sen. George Runner**

WE NEED TO BUILD OPPOSITION to the budget-busting initiative by State Senator Runner, that if passed by the voters in November, will result in cuts to schools, healthcare, eldercare and other vital services. The Runner initiative, if unopposed and allowed to pass, would:

- Cost the State General Fund upwards of \$1 billion in FY 2009-2010, \$500 million in the subsequent year, AND more each year thereafter for prisons, jails, and law enforcement costs.
- Burden county and city budgets with unfunded mandates, resulting in cuts to locally funded programs.
- Provide for no additional revenue, therefore requiring cuts in healthcare, eldercare, education and other vital services.
- Increase incarceration rates at the state and local level, especially among minors and young persons from communities of color.
- Take money currently available to counties for mental health and drug treatment services for youth, and give those moneys entirely to probation departments.
- Change California law in numerous ways. The initiative is a 30-page wish-list, loaded with costly measures that failed passage in State Senate and Assembly Public Safety, Appropriations, or Budget Committees, including prosecuting more 14-year-olds as adults and sending more adults to prison for drug use.

**From the LAO letter to Attorney General, January 29, 2008**

### ***SUMMARY OF FISCAL EFFECTS:***

The measure would have the following fiscal effects:

- Net state costs likely to exceed a half billion dollars annually primarily for increased funding of criminal justice programs, as well as for increased costs for prison and parole operations.
- Unknown one-time state capital outlay costs potentially exceeding a half billion dollars for prison facilities.
- Unknown net fiscal impact for state trial courts, county jails, and other local criminal justice agencies

**JOIN THE OPPOSITION! READ NAACP and CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS STATEMENTS OF OPPOSITION AT:**

<http://www.defeatrunner.org>

**LEARN MORE:**

- Legislative Analyst Office Report <http://www.lao.ca.gov/ballot/2007/070919.pdf>
- Runner Initiative Document [http://ag.ca.gov/cms\\_attachments/initiatives/pdfs/i765\\_07-0094\\_a1s.pdf](http://ag.ca.gov/cms_attachments/initiatives/pdfs/i765_07-0094_a1s.pdf)

**For More Information Contact Zachary Norris of Ella Baker Center at 510-428-3940 x239**