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March 18, 2011

Mike Ennis  
District 5 County Supervisor  
2800 W. Burrel Avenue  
Visalia, CA 93291

Dear Supervisor Ennis,

I am writing to urge your board to send an urgent message to Governor Brown to veto Assembly Bill 109, which if signed into law would have a chilling effect on public safety in our county.

This flawed measure was passed on a partisan vote yesterday in a package of budget measures sent to the Governor. It has the potential to lead to the early release of more than 68,000 prisoners, including child molesters, individuals who commit hate crimes and those convicted of various gang offenses. A list of the proposed felons who would be sent to overcrowded local jails is attached for your information.

It is important to note that this bill contains no funding for local programs and goes into effect immediately. It is not tied to the passage of any constitutional amendment guaranteeing funding or local control.

The Governor has proposed a Constitutional Amendment which would provide short term funding and some nominal protection for local agencies. Keep in mind that polls show this measure is opposed by a strong majority of likely voters and is destined to fail if it ever makes it to the ballot-- which seems unlikely at this time. This means that local agencies will be burdened with a large influx of prisoners, without the resources necessary to supervise them.

I'm sure you will agree that any discussion on realignment should be bipartisan and based on building a consensus around what is best for local communities and the state as a whole. This partisan effort to shift dangerous prisoners to crowded local facilities and to reduce parole supervision was imposed on our communities by a simple majority vote of the Legislature. Additional crimes can be added to the list of prisoners sent to already-overcrowded local facilities by another majority vote of the Legislature.

This is why all negotiations and votes on realignment should cease until constitutional guarantees are in place and the Governor is committed to a bi-partisan inclusive process. Any realignment bill should be contingent on the passage of constitutional protection. Relying on a draft proposal for protection that has not even passed the Legislature, let alone been approved by voters, is a recipe for failure.

If this bill is signed into law, it is an important indication that the Governor and his allies in the Legislature are not committed to a thoughtful process, but simply wish to burden local communities without the appropriate guarantees.

Please ask the Governor to veto this dangerous bill and to work with all stakeholders to pass a realignment plan that will not endanger our constituents.

Sincerely,

Connie Conway  
Assemblywoman, 34<sup>th</sup> District