



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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March 24, 2025

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 357 (Menjivar) - Juveniles: Delinquency - OPPOSE

Dear Senator Menjivar,

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill 357 which seeks to authorize the board of supervisors of any county to delegate to another county department all or part of the duties and authorities concerning minors that are statutorily imparted to probation departments or probation officers.

County probation has long been a cornerstone of the juvenile justice system, a system which serves both juveniles (12-17) and emerging adults (18-24) adjudicated for offenses ranging from minor misdemeanors to serious and violent felonies. The success of the juvenile system is dependent upon the roles and responsibilities played by Probation. Overseeing the entirety of the continuum provides Probation a unique position to recognize the importance of working with youth in the prevention, intervention and deflection stages. That work, combined with training and research-based approaches, allows Probation to support and foster the utilization of interventions on the front end of the continuum where safe and appropriate to be supported in the community, thereby reserving detention for those youth who pose a public safety risk. When necessary, an order into detention must be handled by trained experts in both rehabilitative and safety concepts. Probation serves the youth, families, the community, the county and ultimately the court to balance the needs of safely housing youth while working towards a rehabilitation plan developed specific to their individual needs.

Our Probation Department has extensive training and experience in evidence-based approaches to working with youth, young adults, adults and we are deeply concerned not only about the potential impacts of this bill on community safety, service coordination at the county level, coordination with the courts, and the justice system's ability to function effectively, but also about similar impacts to recipient departments and the constituencies they serve.

It raises many questions and impacts that we must not overlook around what this proposed change would mean for community safety, local coordination among entities, training requirements, fiscal impacts, and the local implementation of state policies and requirements governing the juvenile justice system.

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To redirect these responsibilities would impact and disrupt local service continuity, create public safety risks, and negatively impact the community safety services to balance safety and treatment for youth and adults.

For these reasons, the County of Mendocino opposes Senate Bill 357.

Sincerely,



John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: All Members and Consultants of the Senate Committee on Public Safety
The Honorable Mike McGuire, California State Senate, 2nd District
The Honorable Chris Rogers, California State Assembly, 2nd District