



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 25th, 2017 **Contact:** Melinda Aiello, Asst. Chief Deputy District Attorney
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DISTRICT ATTORNEY ENCOURAGES THE PUBLIC TO OFFER COMMENTS TO STATE PRISON OFFICIALS ON PAROLE REGULATIONS

(Woodland, CA) - August 25th, 2017 - The California Department of Corrections announced that the period for public comment is open on the implementation of Proposition 57.

On November 8, 2016, voters approved Proposition 57, also known as the Public Safety and Rehabilitation Act of 2016. One of the key provisions allows inmates, convicted of a nonviolent offense and sentenced to state prison, to be eligible for parole consideration after completing the full term of his or her primary offense. In enacting Prop 57, the law requires that the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) develop regulations that "protect and enhance public safety." CDCR is accepting public comments on the proposed regulations, but they must be received by September 1, 2017.

The California District Attorney's Association (CDAA) has identified portions of the regulations that raise public safety concerns and, therefore, District Attorneys are urging the public to comment directly to CDCR. Concerning proposed regulations include:

- Contrary to the ballot language of Prop 57, under the proposed regulations an inmate convicted of both violent and nonviolent offenses could be eligible for early release once they have served their sentence for the violent offense.
- Letters of opposition sent in by victims will not be kept confidential from the inmate. This effectively deprives victims of their constitutional right to be heard at any hearing as many victims live in fear of their offender and will undoubtedly decide not to issue a statement for fear of retribution. Additionally, victims only have 30 days to comment.
- The proposed regulations do not allow prosecutors to access an inmate's central prison file. Without such access, prosecutors cannot address an inmate's institutional behavior and programming in prison, which are factors considered for early parole.
- Under the proposed regulations, inmates have a right to contest a parole denial, but prosecutors and victims are denied that same right when parole is granted.

- Under the proposed regulations, prosecutors are given only 30 days to prepare and submit a written statement to the parole board. This is an insufficient amount of time to obtain and review all case files, arrest reports, prior convictions and other relevant documents, and locate the victims so their voices can be heard. Prosecutors are requesting 90 days.

Citizens demand transparency, particularly in the criminal justice process. Given the possibility of such substantial reductions in lawfully imposed sentences, it is important that the parole board be fully informed of all the pertinent information regarding inmates from all parties.

Any person may submit written comments about the proposed regulations to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Regulation and Policy Management Branch (RPMB), P.O. Box 942883, Sacramento, CA 94283-0001, by fax to (916) 324-6075, or by e-mail to CDCR-Prop57-Comments@cdcr.ca.gov. All written comments must be received by the close of the public comment period September 1, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

For more information please visit CDCR's website.

<http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/proposition57/docs/FAQ-Prop-57-Nonviolent-Parole-Process.pdf>

<http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/proposition57/>

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