

★ ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 20 ★

"He slashed at me with a knife and tried to kill me," says Terra Newell, who survived a knife attack by the sociopath Dirty John. "It was brutal and terrifying—but in California, his attack wasn't a violent crime."

Under California law, assault with a deadly weapon is classified a "nonviolent" offense—along with date rape, selling children for sex, and 19 other clearly violent crimes.

All are "nonviolent" under the law.

Proposition 20 fixes this.

"Nonviolent" crimes in California include domestic violence, exploding a bomb, shooting into a house with the intent to kill or injure people, raping an unconscious person and beating a child so savagely it could result in coma or death.

Sex traffickers typically beat, rape and drug their victims before selling them for sex. But in California, trafficking is a "nonviolent" offense. Even hate crimes are considered "nonviolent."

As a result, thousands of offenders convicted of these 22 violent crimes, including sex offenders and child molesters, are eligible for early prison release, WITHOUT serving their full sentences, and WITHOUT their victims being warned.

Proposition 20 PREVENTS the early release of violent offenders and sexual predators by making these 22 violent crimes "violent" under the law, and requires that victims be notified when their assailants are set free.

Proposition 20's "full sentence" provision applies ONLY to violent inmates who pose a risk to public safety, regardless of race or ethnicity. It does NOT apply to drug offenders and petty criminals, and does NOT send more people to prison.

"Claims that Proposition 20 will fill our prisons with thousands of new inmates are false," says Michele Hanisee, president of the Association of Deputy District Attorneys.

"It doesn't send one new person to prison. It simply requires violent offenders and sexual predators to complete their full sentences."

This protects victims and gives offenders longer access to counseling, anger management and other rehabilitation programs.

"Proposition 20 protects children against physical abuse and sexual exploitation," says Klaas Kids Foundation founder Marc Klaas. "Trafficking children will finally be recognized as the violent crime it is."

Proposition 20 provides additional protection against violent crime by allowing DNA collection from persons convicted of theft or drug offenses, which multiple studies show helps solve more serious and violent crimes like rape, robbery and murder.

California reduced penalties for theft in 2014. Since then, major theft has increased 25%, costing grocers, small business owners, retailers, homeowners and consumers billions of dollars. Shoplifting has become so common it's seldom reported.

Proposition 20 strengthens sanctions against serial theft by habitual criminals—to help stop car break-ins, shoplifting, home burglaries and other major theft.

California's drug addiction crisis is fueling much of this theft. By strengthening sanctions against theft, Proposition 20 helps get addicts (who are 75% of California's homeless population) off the streets and into the substance abuse and mental health programs they desperately need.

Voting "YES" on Proposition 20 is a vote against hate and violence.

It's a vote for children, victims and survivors.

It's a vote for equal justice and a safer California.

**PATRICIA WENSKUNAS**, Founder  
Crime Survivors, Inc.

**NINA SALARNO BESSELMAN**, President  
Crime Victims United of California

**CHRISTINE WARD**, Director  
Crime Victims Alliance

★ REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 20 ★

NO ON PROP. 20—IT'S A PRISON SPENDING SCAM

We are prosecutors and survivors of violent crimes. Prop. 20 backers are wrong, here's the truth:

SENTENCING LAWS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES ARE CLEAR AND STRONG

People who commit violent crimes receive severe and lengthy sentences, often life in prison. That's NOT what Prop. 20 is about.

PROP. 20 WASTES TENS OF MILLIONS OF YOUR TAXPAYER DOLLARS ON PRISONS

The non-partisan Legislative Analyst says Prop. 20 will cost, "tens of millions of dollars" every year which could force draconian cuts to:

- Rehabilitation in prison for people getting out
- Mental health programs proven to reduce repeat crime
- Schools, housing, and homelessness
- Support for victims

PROP. 20 IS EXTREME

Prop 20 means petty theft—stealing a bike—could be charged

as a felony. That's out of line with other states and means more teenagers and Black, Latino and low-income people could be incarcerated for years for a low-level, non-violent crime.

PROP. 20 TAKES US BACKWARDS

Californians have overwhelmingly voted to reduce wasteful prison spending. Prop. 20 reverses that progress. Rehabilitating people before prison release is the most effective way to improve public safety. Prop. 20 could eliminate funding for what works, and waste money on more prisons we don't need.

Law enforcement leaders, budget experts, criminal justice reformers, prosecutors, and crime victims all oppose this prison spending scam.

*NoProp20.Vote*

**DIANA BECTON**, District Attorney  
Contra Costa County

**RENEE WILLIAMS**, Executive Director  
National Center for Victims of Crime

**TINISCH HOLLINS**, California Director  
Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

★ ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 20 ★

**STOP THE PRISON SPENDING SCAM—VOTE NO ON PROP. 20!**

California already has lengthy sentences and strict punishment for serious and violent crime. Backers of Prop. 20 are trying to scare you into rolling back effective criminal justice reforms you just passed, to spend tens of millions of your taxpayer dollars on prisons.

Don't be fooled. Every year, thousands are convicted of felonies with long sentences. The problem isn't sentencing, it's what happens in prison to prepare people for release. Prop 20 could slash mental health treatment and rehabilitation programs—proven strategies to reduce repeat crime. That will make us all less safe.

Crime victims, law enforcement leaders as well as budget and rehabilitation experts oppose Prop. 20 because it wastes tens of millions on prisons while cutting rehabilitation programs and support for crime victims. Prop. 20 is a prison spending scam that takes us backwards.

**PROP. 20 WASTES YOUR MONEY ON PRISONS.**

Prop. 20 will spend tens of millions of taxpayer dollars—your money—on prisons. California is facing massive cuts to schools, health care, and other critical services. Spending tens of millions more on prisons right now is a wasteful scam.

**PROP. 20 IGNORES HOMELESSNESS, SCHOOLS, MENTAL HEALTH, AND HOUSING.**

We must always do more to address crime, but Prop. 20 will make things worse. Prop. 20 wastes tens of millions of your taxpayer dollars on prisons that would be better spent on schools, homelessness, mental health treatment, and affordable housing.

**PROP. 20 IS EXTREME.**

Prop 20 means that theft over \$250 could be charged as a felony. That's extreme, out of line with other states, and means more teenagers and Black, Latino and low income people could be locked up for years for low-level, non-violent crimes.

**PROP 20 CUTS THE USE OF REHABILITATION—MAKING US LESS SAFE.**

Rehabilitation is a proven strategy to reduce repeat crime, so people become law-abiding, productive, taxpaying citizens. Prop 20 could cut rehabilitation—meaning fewer people would be ready to re-enter society when they are released, which would harm public safety.

**PROP. 20 REDUCES NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR CRIME VICTIMS.**

While overspending on prisons, Prop. 20 will slash financial support available to help victims of crime recover from trauma.

**PROP. 20 TAKES US BACKWARDS.**

California has made progress, carefully enacting modest reforms to reduce wasteful prison spending, and expand rehabilitation and other alternatives that have proven to cost-effectively reduce and prevent crime. People are demanding more changes to fix unjust policies that disproportionately harm poor people and people of color. Prop. 20 would repeal the progress we've made and take us backwards toward the failed, wasteful, and unjust policies of the past.

**EXPERTS ON CRIME, SPENDING, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGREE.**

Prop. 20 will NOT make our communities safer. Prop. 20 WILL waste tens of millions of YOUR taxpayer dollars on prisons—causing CUTS to critical services people need.

**STOP the Prison Spending Scam. VOTE NO on Prop. 20!**

*NoProp20.vote*

*#StopthePrisonSpendingScam*

**TINISCH HOLLINS**, California Director  
Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

**WILLIAM LANDSDOWNE**, Police Chief (ret.)  
City of San Diego

**MICHAEL COHEN**, Director of Finance (fmr.)  
State of California

★ REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 20 ★

Opponents ignore what Proposition 20 really does—it PREVENTS convicted child molesters, sexual predators and other violent inmates from being released from prison early.

Under current law, these inmates now qualify for early release because their violent crimes are classified as “nonviolent.”

Proposition 20 closes this loophole, making crimes like date rape, child trafficking, spouse beating, and assault with a deadly weapon “violent” under the law.

“Proposition 20 does NOT send one new person to prison,” says Michael Rushford, President of the Criminal Justice Legal Foundation. “It does NOT allocate funds for new prisons, nor slash funding for mental health and rehabilitation programs. These are FALSE arguments.”

Opponents claim Proposition 20 makes petty theft a “serious felony,” and say offenders “could be locked up in state prison for years.”

Both claims are untrue.

Read the initiative. Proposition 20 specifically targets HABITUAL thieves who REPEATEDLY steal. And it specifically

FORBIDS convicted offenders from being sent to state prison. Instead, they'll be directed to local jail or rehabilitation programs.

By targeting only violent offenders and habitual criminals, Proposition 20 protects ALL Californians, including people of color, who studies show suffer disproportionately from violent crime.

We all want to reform our justice system. But allowing violent offenders to leave prison early isn't reform. It's a threat to public safety.

Proposition 20 is REAL reform that protects victims and ensures equal justice.

Vote YES on Proposition 20.

**FRANK LEE**, President  
Organization for Justice and Equality

**ERIC R. NUÑEZ**, President  
California Police Chiefs Association

**PATRICIA WENSKUNAS**, Founder  
Crime Survivors Inc.