



As of April 12th, 2012,
Welcome Home L.A.
 is endorsed by:

**Elected and
 Appointed Officials:**

Lawrence Aubry
 Former Inglewood School
 Board Member and Columnist
 for The Sentinel

Carol Biondi
 Honorable Daniel K. Tabor
 Former Mayor, Inglewood

Organizations:

A New Way of Life
 All of Us or None - L.A., Bay
 Area and National
 Association of Black
 Psychologists
 BACDO – *Black Awareness
 Community Development
 Organization*
 Celes King III Family
 Foundation

Children’s Job Club, Inc.
 CCFP/Meals on Wheels
 CJNY – *Community Justice
 Network for Youth*
 CORE California Schools
 Critical Resistance

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Welcome Home L.A. represents a Reentry Plan created by:

- Currently and formerly incarcerated youth and our families
- Liberated lifers
- Victims of violence
- Community and faith-based organizations that serve people returning to the community from juvenile halls, Probation camps, jails and prisons.

This plan was developed in response to the “**Los Angeles County Young Offender Reentry Blueprint**” (commissioned by the Los Angeles County Department of Community and Senior Services and prepared by UCLA). **In response to the inadequate representation of youth, family and community voice or vision evident in the County’s final Blueprint, we released this alternative plan on February 16, 2011, at the County’s official release of its Blueprint.** Since then, several prominent groups and individuals have endorsed the plan.

Currently, LA County is determining how it will address the “realignment” plan of Governor Brown, which will shift Parole responsibilities to local government. In LA, the County Department of Probation and the Sheriffs Department will have the leading roles in realignment design and implementation, and control of the tens of millions of dollars that comes with it. We are urging the County to support all the community and faith based organizations that have quietly and effectively served people coming home from prison for decades. **It is our urgent hope that we can bring about the development of a successful, humane, just, cost effective and innovative Reentry and Realignment Plan for LA.**

THERE ARE 16 CORE REENTRY PRIORITIES OF WELCOME HOME L.A.:

1. Make job preparation, creation and placement the central strategy of the County’s reentry plan. *(It’s no mystery why we’re on the street. We need to eat.)*
2. BAN THE BOX on applications regarding past convictions and end all discrimination against people with system experience, including the denial of access to employment, public housing and Section 8, social services, education, financial aid and public assistance.
3. Provide everyone coming home from custody with the public documents needed for their immediate access to essential services, including a birth certificate, state ID or Driver’s License, Social Security Card, school transcript and test scores, immunization and other medical, mental health records and

**Endorsements as of
05-24-11 continued:**

CURB – *Californians United for a Responsible Budget*

Drug Policy Alliance

Enlace – *The alliance of low-wage worker centers, unions, and community organizations in Mexico and in the U.S.*

Fair Chance Project

Freedom Skoolz

ICUPJE – *International Council of Urban Peace, Justice and Empowerment*

IDEPSCA – *Instituto de Educacion Popular de Sur de California*

ImaginAction

INCITE! L.A. – *Incite: Women of Color Against Violence*

L.A.U.R.A. – *Life After Uncivil Ruthless Acts*

L.A. CAN - *Los Angeles Community Action Network*

Labor Community Strategy Center

MEChA de ECC – *El Camino College*

National Association of Social Workers, CA Women's Council and California Chapter

PV Jobs

Project Cry No More

Sunrise Outreach Center

Violence Prevention Coalition

UCLA Barrio Service Learning

Violence Prevention Coalition

W. Haywood Burns Institute

Youth Justice Coalition

Youth Speak Collective

Continued on the next page...

prescriptions. For people who are eligible, they should also return home enrolled in Medical or Child Health Plus. For undocumented people, ensure that they understand the increased risk of deportation for convicted people and link them to resources that can facilitate a path to citizenship.

4. Undocumented people must be notified of their options regarding a path to citizenship, as well as potential risks for deportation.
5. End the use of any labels that further dehumanize, criminalize or isolate people including, but not limited to ex-offender, youth offender, felon or ex-felon, convict, inmate, ward of the state/court, juvenile delinquent, minor, suspect, perpetrator, criminal, super-predator or gang member. Instead refer to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child's use of the term youth "in conflict with the law," or use system-involved people, formerly incarcerated people, or people returning home from lock-ups. When referring to the gang database, gang injunctions and gang enhancements, refer to *alleged* gang members.
6. Focus on family and community connection and reunification at every stage of the system. Reentry must start at arrest, and maintain families and communities at the center.
7. End the billing of families for the time their child is in the system, which increases financial instability, stress and conflict among family members.
8. Connect youth to positive alternatives to the street and save youth lives by investing in community intervention/peace workers and youth centers open year-around, 3pm – midnight.
9. End the School-to-Jail Track that cycles youth in and out of lock-up including ending: The issuing of truancy tickets; Discipline policies that over-rely on suspensions, expulsions, arrests and violations; Probation violations and re-incarceration for school attendance and grades; Illegal exclusion of youth returning home from lock-ups to re-enroll in schools and/or districts; and the Unequal/substandard resources given continuation schools that work with the majority of system involved youth.
10. Provide free tattoo removal upon request both inside institutions and in communities.
11. Build community involvement at all levels of the system, including supporting community-based alternatives to arrest, court, detention, incarceration and violation.
12. Require that law enforcement, Probation, courts and school districts collect and regularly release data on R²EGGO³ - (Race, Referring Agency, Ethnicity, Gender, Geography/Zip Code, Offense, Officer and Outcome) in order to monitor racial disparities, *referred to in the system as "disproportionate minority contact/DMC,"* other forms of discrimination, misuse of lock-up, lack of standard policies and procedures across the county, and recidivism.
13. Stop the revolving door in and out of the system. End the use of lock-ups (juvenile halls, Probation camps, jails and state prison) for technical Parole and Probation violations, Gang Injunction violations, or to address school truancy or discipline issues.
14. Educate on, protect *and implement* the right of detained and convicted people to register and vote from both inside institutions and in the community, as well as to participate fully in the planning and implementation of justice policy and programs, including reentry.
15. Ensure that *all* youth have an opportunity to reenter the community by promoting the passing of state law and local practices by the District Attorney to end the use of Life Without the Possibility of Parole and other extreme sentences.
16. Implement Restorative/Transformative Justice throughout the system and the community to ensure that: The root causes of conflicts, violence and crime are actually addressed; and that all people in conflict with the law have an opportunity to repair the harm that we have caused as well as to heal from the harm caused to us.

Each of these priorities and several additional points are expanded upon below.

THE REENTRY GOALS OF WELCOME HOME L.A. ARE TO:

1. Facilitate the reunification and future success of system involved young people and our families.

**Endorsements as of
03-24-11 continued:**

**Leaders in the Victims'
Rights Movement:**

Adela Barajas whose
sister-in-law was murdered.

Vickey Lindsey
whose son and husband were
both murdered.

Advocates:

Elizabeth Calvin, Esq.
Director Children's Rights
Division, Human Rights Watch,
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Celes King IV

Catherine Lambert
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Educators and Researchers:

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Family Justice Center,
Northwestern University

Dr. Cheryl Grills, Ph.D.
Associate Dean and
Professor of Psychology
Loyola Marymount University

Dr. Jorja Leap
Ph.D., UCLA Luskin School
of Public Affairs

Barbara Madeloni and
Kysa Nygreen, Professors
School of Education
University of
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Paul Ortiz, Professor
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Studies and African American
Studies, University of Florida

**Criminal/Juvenile System
Professionals**

Kristine Berrios
Substance Abuse Counselor
within youth prison

Solorzano-Zevallos Consulting
Court Mandated Anger
Management

2. Support the healing of victims.

3. Lift up the leadership and potential of all community members including those of us with convictions.

4. Reduce the high rates of recidivism in California (74% for youth returning home from youth correctional facilities, 81% for youth and adults returning from state prisons).

5. Save our cities, county and state billions of dollars each year.

In order to meet the reentry goals outlined above, we urge Los Angeles County to implement a re-entry plan based on five community rights:

RIGHT TO RESPECT AND A FRESH START

1. Changing language, perceptions and expectations are the cheapest and most important things you can do to respect, inspire and build trust with people returning home; end discrimination, stereotypes and misperceptions toward people who have experienced the system; challenge the fear that the community has toward people with convictions; and embrace and integrate people into groups, organizations and communities.
 - End the use of any labels that further dehumanize, criminalize or isolate people including, but not limited to: ex-offender, youth offender, felon or ex-felon, convict, inmate, ward of the state/court, juvenile delinquent, minor, Parolee/Probationer, suspect, perpetrator, criminal, high risk, at risk, drop out, drug addict, super-predator or gang member.
 - Instead refer to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child's use of the term youth "in conflict with the law," or use system-involved people, formerly incarcerated people, or people returning home from lock-ups. When referring to the gang database, gang injunctions and gang enhancements, refer to *alleged* gang members.
 - Integrate people returning home fully into schools and communities rather than segregating us in separate classrooms or facilities, or barring our access all together.
 - When we are in public spaces – such as schools, youth centers and other facilities – don't reveal that we are/were in the system, pull us out of class, broadcast our history, look first at us whenever a ham occurs, or share our records in public.
 - See us by our assets – talents, skills, and dreams – all that we can *contribute* to the community, not by our deficits, faults, illnesses, or what we "cost" the community.
 - Share responsibility. Currently, law enforcement, courts and elected officials hold people arrested and our families solely responsible for crime and the harm it causes. This framing of the issue will never result in any significant transformation of our communities. Focus also on the root causes of crime and violence. For example, L.A. is #1 worldwide (with Riverside and San Bernardino County) in the production and distribution of methamphetamine; #1 until recently in the manufacturing, and still #1 in the distribution of hand guns; San Pedro and Long Beach are the only ports in world that are major importers and exporters of *all five illegal drugs* (meth, marijuana, cocaine, heroin and ecstasy); L.A. is #1 worldwide in the production and distribution of pornography (magazines, films and toys); L.A. is #1 nationwide in homelessness (youth, families and single adults); #1 nationwide in the number of children in foster care; and #1 nationwide in the gap between rich and poor and the number of children living in poverty. These issues are rarely discussed – let alone addressed – in the debate over justice policy.
 - Recognize that people with convictions have a lot to contribute to schools and communities. We are banned from nearly every *volunteer* opportunity to give back, regardless of our charges.
 - Recognize that we, *and our families*, suffer life-long police/system contact, background checks, degradation, humiliation and shame – often in secrecy – due to the ill treatment of people with convictions.
 - Do not judge our families, including our brothers and sisters or our own children, by our actions. Do not judge us based on the actions of our families. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity at visiting, in court, in school and on the street – regardless of their family's experience with the system.

- Understand that many people in the system were totally innocent of the charges they were convicted of, or were associated with the crime, but not the main person to cause the harm. Once convicted, these truths are forever lost.
 - We are all better than our worst act. See us, treat us, as you would want your own children seen and treated.
 - We have done our time and paid our debt. We will always be responsible and have a role in giving back to the people and community who we have harmed. But, beyond that, we should not be punished for the rest of our lives.
2. End the use of Parole sweeps, gang sweeps and gang injunctions as a tool of gentrification that brings undue economic hardship upon families already struggling to maintain housing for themselves and their loved ones returning home from prison.
 3. Remove people returning home from lock-ups, as well as Probationers and Parolees who complete their sentence from gang databases and injunctions. Remove everyone who is not convicted of a crime within five years.
 - Change policy so that everyone added to gang databases and gang injunctions is guaranteed the right to notification of when they are either added or removed, (as well as parent notification for anyone under the age of 18); an opportunity to appeal the label if they are not affiliated or active; a clear, fair and consistent removal process; and a right to resources regardless of their involvement.
 4. Create alternatives to court and detention to handle Probation, Parole and Gang Injunction violations to prevent the loss of employment, housing, financial aid and education when people cycle in and out of lock-ups. (CDCR has reported that as many as 51% of the people in state prison are there for technical or low-level Parole violations.)
 5. Exempt community-based organizations from gang injunctions, so people are not blocked from programming.
 6. In order to increase the community's trust in law enforcement and use of the reentry resources that law enforcement departments have, use the resources of the State and Federal Attorney General's Offices and the Departments of Justice to investigate and monitor police violence in L.A. County. Appoint a special prosecutor from the state to prosecute cases in L.A.
 7. Ensure that everyone in lock-up receives legal information on what to do doing a police stop, rights and responsibilities in schools, and on the conditions of their Probation and/or Parole in order to prevent unnecessary violations.
 8. Require that law enforcement, Probation, courts and school districts collect and regularly release for public review data on all system contact broken down by R²EGGO³ - (Race, Referring Agency, Ethnicity, Gender, Geography/Zip Code, Offense, Officer and Outcome) in order to monitor racial disparities, referred to in the system as "disproportionate minority contact/DMC," other forms of discrimination, misuse of lock-up, lack of standard policies and procedures across the county, and recidivism. This is essential for system transparency and accountability; to protect against unjust system contact; to challenge racism, gender discrimination and other system bias; to end the recycling of people in and out of the system; and to evaluate and improve programs and policies.

RIGHT TO RESOURCES

9. Once a person is arrested, their life chances for success in education, employment, and health are dramatically reduced. Unnecessary detention and incarceration create unnecessary reentry. **End the criminalization of activities that are better addressed by youth development, community service, harm reduction and treatment. Lock-ups do a notoriously horrible job of reducing or preventing:**
 - Status offenses – running away, homelessness, loitering, truancy/day time curfew violations, and nighttime curfew violations.
 - Sex work.
 - Substance use and abuse. Instead, provide harm reduction, drug treatment, mental health treatment and drug/alcohol education both inside lock-ups, in schools and communities. Assess needs at intake, provide services throughout the entire period of confinement, and refer people to essential resources at release. In addition, provide overdose prevention counseling – including information about how to acquire and use naloxone – prior to release. *Overdose risks are the highest among drug users upon release from incarceration.*
 - Graffiti.
 - Evading the fare for Metro trains and busses. Instead, for \$24 a month, invest in a Metro pass for all youth and ensure their ability to access school, employment, enrichment opportunities (such as parks, museums, mountains and beaches), and youth development programs throughout the County.
10. Imagine that today you lose all your IDs, your medical records, your prescriptions, your school records. Imagine that you lose these records for all your children as well. Now imagine that you don't have a car, you have limited income for gas and fees, maybe you don't speak English, and you have to find more than \$100 for each person, take days off work, and navigate from one end of the county to the other in order to replace the documents. Now imagine that you are 16, without a family, and you are expected to do the same. Or imagine further that at the gate of a state prison, no matter how many hundreds of hours you worked, you are given \$200 with which you also have to fund your 4 or 6 or 10-hour travel home. Imagine that upon your release from County Jail, you are dumped on the street

without any money or Metro fare in the middle of the night. From juvenile halls and camps, you could be released to a parent, guardian, foster care or placement, and you come home to another place you may have never known. (Youth are often kept past their release date waiting for adequate housing.) Now, imagine also returning home, and having to enroll in school, find housing, find a job and get medical care, mental health treatment and/or drug treatment *OR FACE VIOLATION AND REINCARCERATION*. *But, you don't have any of the documents needed to enroll.*

- Provide everyone coming home from custody with the public documents needed for their immediate access to essential services, including a birth certificate, state ID or Driver's License, Social Security Card, school transcripts and test scores, immunization and other medical records, mental health records and prescriptions.
 - For people who are eligible, they should also return home enrolled in Medical or Child Health Plus.
 - Undocumented people must be notified of their options regarding a path to citizenship, as well as potential risks for deportation.
 - Providing documents is the most essential and cheapest way to reconnect people to essential resources and positive environments.
 - This is also the most essential and cheapest way to break people away from our dependence on the underground economy. *Drug dealers, pimps and OGs never asked us for an ID or immunization to start work.*
 - To be under the custody of the state means that *under the law*, lock-ups are legal guardians. Division of Juvenile Justice facilities that get \$261,000 a year, juvenile halls and camps that get upwards of \$50,000 a year, and state prisons and jails that get \$50,000 or more per person have a moral obligation to provide essential documents to the people under their custody.
 - This small cost of approximately \$120 per person will save L.A. County's families and/or case managers hundreds of hours in wages and transportation costs.
11. Provide people coming home with referrals for immediate enrollment in school, job training, mental health/health care, drug treatment and housing (as needed), as well as necessary prescriptions (including enough medication to last until they can visit a medical provider in their community) *PRIOR TO THEIR RELEASE*.
- In order to assist people in reconnecting to community and services, as well as to help them exit the system, establish family resource centers connected to all lock-ups and courts coordinated by community based organizations and staffed by people who have themselves transitioned home or helped family members to transition home. Where County Probation has family resource centers, these would be more cheaply and effectively run by community groups.
12. Remove the barriers to reentry by ending discrimination against convicted people in housing, education, financial aid, employment, and access to essential services and government aid.
- Uphold state and federal law by investigating and prosecuting those who discriminate against convicted people.
 - Challenge the practice by public housing and Section 8 (under federal law) of evicting people upon arrest – and failing to reverse the eviction even when people are acquitted.
 - Challenge the practice (under federal law) of evicting entire families when even one member – *even a family visitor* – is arrested. Similarly, if the case is dismissed or the person acquitted, the family is not guaranteed to be, and is rarely readmitted.
 - Challenge any barriers to obtaining food stamps, public assistance or college financial aid due to convictions.
13. BAN THE BOX regarding convictions from county employment applications, eliminate background checks wherever they are not needed, and promote that all federal and city agencies as well as private companies do the same. California state and numerous counties, cities and corporations across the country have already done this. *L.A. is behind in this effort.* These same considerations should be made for volunteer opportunities, as mentioned above.
14. Establish a County Department of Youth Development to:
- Build a culture in Los Angeles that celebrates, uplifts, employs, protects and provides comprehensive opportunities for all youth ages 0 to 24.
 - Distribute funds for community-based, owned and operated alternatives to arrest, Probation and Parole violations, court, detention and incarceration, as well as funds for services to youth inside lock-ups and when they return home.
 - Fund community and school-based intervention/peace workers.
 - Provide youth jobs, recruit employment opportunities, and coordinate job training, entrepreneurship, and apprenticeship opportunities for youth.
 - Build the skills, capacity and innovation of youth-serving organizations.
 - Train and support the community to protect and serve young people.
15. Fund 500 full-time community intervention/peace workers:
- Who have the respect and relationships needed to prevent and mediate community conflict, as well as conflict between communities – also known as a *License to Operate*;
 - Who have the relationships and skills needed to act as case managers and mentor youth with system involvement and connect them and their families to essential services;

- To provide safe passage and intervention in and around schools;
- To prevent/reduce domestic and neighborhood violence;
- To reduce youth reliance on violence to solve conflicts;
- To help affiliated youth to leave neighborhoods or more to inactive status without retaliation;
- To handle neighborhood rumor control and prevent retaliations;
- To act as first responders to violence when it occurs; and
- To provide crisis response services and ongoing counseling to youth who are involved in, victims of, or witness to violence.

In the first year of the City of Los Angeles' Gang Reduction Youth Development's (GRYD) Summer Night Lights program, the LAPD reported that the areas in Watts that had the program *had no shootings or fights during the summer*, while communities on the west side of the same police division *where the program didn't happen* had continued incidents of violence, including homicide. LAPD captains and South Bureau commanders credited intervention/peace workers, employment for youth most involved and impacted by violence, and comprehensive youth centers open until midnight with the change. Dramatic reductions in violence also occurred in parks where the Sheriff's Department sponsored similar efforts.

This is not a new strategy. In 1955, in response to increased violence and conflict between neighborhoods, New York City employed hundreds of "gang workers" to connect with youth on the streets, and opened schools from 3 – 10pm. Since then, NYC's Department of Youth and Community Development has built a strong infrastructure to initiate, grow, support and strengthen youth work, with more than 50,000 youth programs now in operation in the city. While some programs do provide services specifically for system involved youth, all youth centers are open to all youth. There are not the same barriers to programming that exist in L.A., where system involved and allegedly "gang involved" youth are regularly barred from services.

The cost of one rookie LAPD officer exiting the Academy with salary, uniform, training, equipment and car expenses is \$150,000 a year. The same funds would support salaries and training for three full-time intervention workers at a living wage with benefits.

Evidence demonstrates that connection to positive peer groups and activities during the hours after school and on weekends when youth crime and violence is at its highest is essential to reentry.

16. In order to integrate youth ages 7 – 24, (you can be detained at the age of 7 in L.A. County), who are exiting custody into positive, youth development programs:
 - Fund 50 comprehensive youth centers in areas of the county with the highest incarceration rates open year-around 3pm – 10pm, S-R, and 3pm – Midnight, Friday and Saturday;
 - Provide youth ages 6-24 access to educational enrichment, college preparation, job readiness and placement, recreation, arts, leadership training and opportunities to build community, and restorative/transformational justice, conflict mediation and truce building.
 - Where facilities don't exist, use public schools, public housing centers and city and county parks.
 - Ensure that youth with system involvement and youth who are allegedly gang involved or on gang injunctions are recruited rather than excluded from access to these resources.
 - Youth centers run by law enforcement and other city and county agencies are more costly and less utilized than those run by community based organizations. Youth centers should be run by community-based organizations with a proven track record of drawing and effectively serving system involved youth as well as the general youth population.
17. Provide at least 25,000 jobs for youth returning home from lock-ups.
 - Place youth at settings where they can serve the community and its residents.
 - Create *additional jobs linked to long-term, living wage careers* by requiring all companies contracting with the county, as well as all county agencies to employ and mentor youth with system involvement.
 - Create local hiring agreements for all development projects – private and public – to set aside jobs and union apprenticeships for system-involved youth.
 - Redesign camps to offer certified training in vocations linking youth to college and jobs when they return home. Each camp should include a community college, union and community based organization partnership with Probation.
18. Support and protect all genders by:
 - Ending system (police, Probation and prison guard) discrimination and violence against women and girls.
 - Ending system (police, Probation and prison guard) discrimination and violence against LGBT2Q² people.

- Protecting both the safety and rights of LGBT2Q² communities in detention, incarceration and when returning home.
- Hiring LGBT2Q² staff and/or protect the rights of LGBT2Q² staff to be out on the job.
- Creating gender specific programming, separate units and caseloads as needed.

RIGHT TO RECONNECTION

19. **Reentry should start at time of arrest.** Support and strengthen relationships between youth and their families throughout the time of their detention/incarceration:
 - Provide travel support to and from institutions on visiting days.
 - Whenever possible, detain and incarcerate people at the facility within the closest proximity to their families with a goal of locating people within 50 miles of their home community.
 - Create teleconferencing opportunities for families that cannot visit.
 - Work with the State Department of General Services to renegotiate the contract for phone calls from prisons to ensure that staying in touch doesn't bankrupt families.
 - Parenthood is one of the most powerful factors in many people's transformation. For youth who are also parents, ensure that they have visits from their children while inside and that parenting is a part of their reentry plan.
 - Protect and support the parental rights of parents inside who too often lose their children to adoption or foster care as an outcome of their incarceration. L.A. County has the nation's largest foster care population, including many children orphaned by the prison system.
 - End the practice of handcuffing incarcerated women during delivery.
 - Involve families fully in programming inside institutions and in developing and implementing reentry plans.
 - Hundreds of thousands of children in L.A. County have parents who are detained or incarcerated. Statistically, they are at much greater risk of future system involvement. Support both the success of their parents as well as the success and stability of the child to reconnect children and parents or maintain family connections where they already exist.
 - Don't use family contact – denying calls, mail or visits – as a punishment. Evidence has shown that connection to family is the most significant factor in reentry success.
20. End the system's billing of youth and their families. The financial pressures of billing further stresses families who are already struggling financially, and often creates conflict between youth and their families at the very time when family unity is most needed.
 - Make permanent the moratorium on Probation's billing of families for the time their child is in L.A. County's custody (juvenile hall, camps).
 - Extend this to end the billing of families for court fees, and court-mandated programs such as anger management and parenting.
 - End the use of truancy tickets. They discourage rather than encourage school attendance, lead to Probation violations, if unpaid can lead to warrants and re-arrest in some police jurisdictions, and impact youth abilities to get driver's licenses essential for employment and independence.
 - When young parents are detained and incarcerated, they are often charged child support. They can return home tens of thousands of dollars in debt, making reintegration into the community even more difficult.
 - As mentioned above, families pay much higher rates for phone calls, and are taxed heavily for the money they put on books or commissary purchased for people inside.
 - End the exploitation of families and people inside by guards who "sell" cell phones or temporary use of their own phones, food, cigarettes and other favors and benefits at a huge personal profit. Under current system policy and state law, the buyers – not the guards – are punished for possession or distribution of "contraband."
21. Push the State to end the current practice of releasing people from prison to the County where their charges originated regardless of where family and support resources are located. Families are often the best and least expensive resource for people returning home, and the insistence of locating them in another county for the benefit of Parole or courts is both expensive and more likely to lead to violation.
22. Redesign the halls and camps, and create an alternative to DJJ in L.A. County in order to ensure that every youth comes home better connected to family, college ready, job ready, career knowledgeable, mentally stable and better prepared to make decisions. In order to facilitate the redesign of lock-ups, look to other jurisdictions for inspiration and support – (Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, New York City, Missouri, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil to mention a few).
23. Deportation divides families, increases financial burden on people and communities who are already struggling, and forces children into poverty and foster care.
 - End the Sheriff's agreement with the federal government to check the immigration status of everyone in the county jail system.

- Uphold and strengthen Special Order 40, and work with other police departments in the county to adopt similar protections. This is essential for the safety of *all* residents.
- End police check points and immigration raids of homes and businesses.

RIGHT TO REDEMPTION

24. Work with restorative/transformational justice, victim and prisoner-led groups to build programs that both heal, and when possible, repair the harm caused to individuals and communities by violence and crime. This will also serve to give people returning home from lock-ups the opportunities they both need and want to take responsibility for their actions, as well as to address the victimization they also have suffered. *Nearly everyone in the system was first a victim of crime before they committed a harmful act.*
25. Teach restorative/transformational justice, healing and forgiveness, increase victim contact, and address violent and unhealthy conditions inside lock-ups in order to prepare youth to heal from violence, as well as to resolve conflicts and protect themselves and others without the use of violence or intimidation.
26. Refer youth to community service that is relevant to their case and connects them to community resources. (For example, someone charged with drug dealing might serve at a hospital with babies born addicted to drugs, as opposed to picking up trash on the side of a freeway.)
27. Ensure that everyone detained or incarcerated has access to Chaplains and religious programming upon request.
28. Invest in relief for those people and their families who are wrongfully accused, as well as for those youth who are acquitted after months and years in juvenile hall and jail detention while going back and forth to court. They are often forgotten, but are also in need of reentry support and services, as well as for justice, compensation and a clearing of their name.
29. Ensure that *all* youth in the system have a right to, one day, come home.

Maintain youth in juvenile courts by ending the District Attorney's use of direct filing and strengthening and monitoring fitness hearings in court.

 - a. End the sentencing of youth to strikes, and promote repeal at the state level of the Three Strikes Law. Many youth – even in juvenile court – get strikes, *even more than one*, on their first case. This is not the definition of “career criminal.”
 - b. Advocate at the state level for an end to youth Life Without Parole - (Senate Bill 9) – as well as other extreme sentences, so that reentry is a possibility for all youth. This also serves to increase hope, increase use of positive programming, and reduces violence within institutions further ensuring that reentry is successful.
 - c. Restore Parole rights and opportunities for all people in prison, including pushing the Board of Prison Terms – (BPS, also known as the state's Parole Board) – to follow California State standards regarding the definition of “rehabilitation,” and advocating that the Governor uphold the decisions of the BPS.

RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

30. Educate on, protect *and implement* the right of detained and convicted people to register and vote from both inside institutions and in the community, as well as to participate fully in the planning and implementation of justice policy and programs, including reentry. You have the right to register and vote if:
 - You are detained in a juvenile hall or jail while going back and forth to court.
 - You are convicted and serving time for a misdemeanor.
 - You are home and off Parole, if you have a felony conviction.
 - Everyone inside should be educated on voting rights history and their voting rights, must have access to registration forms and absentee ballots, access to information on candidates and initiatives, sample ballots and opportunities to discuss the issues.
 - Guards and other system staff do not have to right to deny people the right to vote, to limit their access to voting rights information and resources, to campaign for candidates or initiatives while on the job or in uniform, or to influence or intimidate the vote of any one in custody.
31. People with convictions and our families have a right to participate fully in the design and implementation of the County's reentry plan, policies and programs, as well as other system planning.
 - People currently or formerly detained, incarcerated, on Probation or Parole, as well as our families have a right to equal representation on the County's planning and decision-making bodies, and to have an equal voice in public forums to discuss the plan and its implementation.

- People have the right to participate in community organizing efforts, public policy development and advocacy, public forums and to critique of the system and system staff without any risk of threats, intimidation, sanction or punishment.

SAVE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS A YEAR

Any plan that promotes new spending without identifying resources is both unrealistic and irresponsible, especially when our nation, state, county and cities are suffering under huge deficits and cutting essential infrastructure, education and social services.

FIND NEEDED REVENUES WITHOUT SOCIAL SERVICE CUTS OR TAX INCREASES

1. Transfer 1% of the County's law enforcement budget toward Reentry and Community Restoration.

Just 1 percent of L.A.'s law enforcement budget – (Department of Probation, Office of the District Attorney, Office of the City Attorney, Courts, LAPD and Sheriffs) – would provide 100 million dollars each year, and cover the resources needed for: 500 Intervention Workers on the street with a living wage, health benefits, and life insurance; 25,000 Youth Jobs with a guarantee of employment for all youth returning to the community from juvenile halls, Probation Camps, DJJ/CYA, or state prisons as well as youth on gang injunctions and databases; and 50 comprehensive youth centers, each with budgets of \$500,000 a year, open 3pm – midnight in neighborhoods with the highest levels of incarceration and reentry. These priorities were established through surveys of more than 500 residents across L.A. County, collected by YJC members on our annual 50-mile March for Respect from Sylmar (Barry J. Nidorf) Juvenile Hall to Norwalk (Southern Reception Center) Division of Juvenile Justice, State CDCR.

2. Think outside the cage. Immediately close facilities and redirect billions of dollars each year toward the policy changes, jobs and community-based programs described in this plan.

- L.A. has the largest juvenile hall, Probation camp and jail system *in the world*. As many as 20,000 youth pass through L.A.'s juvenile halls every year, and as many as 180,000 youth (18 – 24) and adults pass through L.A.'s jail system every year.
- California has the largest state prison system *in the world* with as many as 176,000 people currently incarcerated in the state and as many as 10,000 additionally locked up outside California to address overcrowding.
- Use L.A.'s considerable political power to push the District Attorney at the County level and the legislature and Governor at the state level to advocate for sentencing reform – including ending the Three Strikes Law; ending youth Life Without Parole and other extreme sentences; releasing older, disabled and seriously-ill people; releasing people incarcerated for drug possession; and creating a sentencing commission.
- Incarceration – especially overcrowded facilities – breed violence, gang affiliation, racial tension, mental illness, substance abuse, and epidemics of disease (such as HIV, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis, staph infection) that make successful rehabilitation and reentry less likely and which also spread these same epidemics of violence, conflict and disease to communities.
- Probation reports that as many as one-third of the youth in their custody are there for violations – not new crimes – and would be better served in the community.
- Across the state and the county, youth arrests have declined by as much as 50 percent.
- L.A. County has approximately 2,200 juvenile hall beds, of which an average of 1,000 – 1,200 are empty.
- L.A. County has at least 2,000 Probation camp beds, of which as many as half are empty.
- Replace *tough on crime* with *smart on crime*. Implementing the Welcome Home plan as well as other fair justice policy will further drop the numbers of youth and other people who are institutionalized, as well as the time people spend inside.
- Many juvenile hall and camp facilities are old, in disrepair and provide inadequate, inhumane and dangerous conditions that are not conducive to healing, rehabilitation or programming.
- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has a 10 billion dollar-a-year budget, reports that as many as 51% of the people incarcerated in state prisons are there for technical parole violations.
- Older people in prison – including many senior citizens, three strikers serving Life sentences for non-violent offenses, and seriously and terminally ill people – fill the prisons and could be sent home without risk to public safety.

- Decriminalizing drugs and expanding drug treatment options would further save the state and local counties millions of dollars each year. Approximately 9,000 people are currently incarcerated in state prisons and thousands more cycle in and out of juvenile halls and jails on drug *possession* charges, during which time they have little to no access to drug education or treatment inside.
- L.A.'s and California's addiction to incarceration has bankrupted our ability to provide K-12 and higher education, medical care, job training and economic development, housing and other essential services to everyone in the state.
- Probation, police, jail and prison guards are also severely impacted by the system and inhumane conditions, suffering the highest rates of suicide, substance abuse, child abuse and domestic violence of any profession.
- Census counts for incarcerated people are credited to the county where they are locked up, not to their home community. L.A. County makes up 27% of the state's population, but 40% of the state's prison and DJJ population losing the county and our residents millions more each year in local resources.
- Prisons and jails are huge polluters – to the air, ground water and land-fills – as well as large users of energy and natural resources, costing the state billions more and the earth's people our future.
- Closing facilities and transferring funds back to communities is not a radical idea. Across the nation, jurisdictions are closing facilities and replacing them with community-based alternatives including Alameda, San Francisco, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties, New York City and New York State, Washington DC, the states of Louisiana and Michigan, to name a few.

3. Support the Youth PROMISE Act – (Congressman Bobby Scott) – by passing a County resolution in support, (as the Los Angeles City Council did), and advocating with federal representatives to provide federal funds for community-based youth development and community intervention and reentry.

4. L.A. County can access approximately 2 million dollars in grant funds as well as in-kind technical assistance through the Annie Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative in order to work on reducing the use of juvenile detention, developing systems for data collection and distribution, and addressing DMC.

WHY WELCOME HOME L.A. WAS DEVELOPED

History: In 2009, the Los Angeles County Department of Community and Senior Services received a \$300,000 grant from the United States Department of Labor to gather the best thinking of community and government leaders – including system-involved people and our families – in order to develop a Reentry Plan for youth returning home from lock-ups (juvenile halls, Probation camps, State Division of Juvenile Justice facilities formerly known as the California Youth Authority, and state prisons.) As stated by the County, the specific goal of the planning grant was to “develop a comprehensive Blueprint for reentry policies and practices for all young offenders (ages 14-25) returning to Los Angeles from juvenile and adult correctional facilities.

The County proceeded to hold community summits in each of the five Supervisorial Districts. In addition, the County contracted with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Public Affairs, Department of Social Welfare to collect the recommendations from the summits and follow-up focus groups, report on re-entry data and write up the final Blueprint. Each full-day summit consisted of several panels dominated by elected officials, correctional system administrators, and researchers, followed by the collection of ideas through small group discussions with the audience. (*A copy of the agendas and speaker lists for each summit are available from the L.A. County Department of Community and Senior Services.*)

Our Attempts to Participate with L.A. County's Reentry Planning Project: In good faith, the endorsers *Welcome Home L.A.* mobilized youth and families with system experience, victims of violence, community and faith leaders to attend the summits, participated in interviews with UCLA as follow-up to the summits, and had several conversations with staff of the County's Department of Community and Senior Services. Many people were concerned by the relatively small inclusion of youth, families and community/ faith leaders as panelists, speakers and facilitators at the summits, especially the inadequate representation by people with system experience. The summits were intimidating for many youth, families and other community people who had a lot to say, but didn't feel confident to address a large crowd. People also raised concerns regarding the lack of transparency and involvement by the community, again especially system-involved people, in the development of the summits and the selection of a researcher for the project. However, we continued to participate in the process, because ***we were promised that the recommendations collected through the engagement of panelists and audience members would be reflected in the final plan.*** In fact, in the few cases where community leaders – *including people who had been incarcerated, family members and community and faith-based organizations that serve people returning home* – spoke at the summits, they got the most resounding applause from the audiences assembled. Therefore, we were hopeful that we had been both heard and understood.

In the end, the final plan reflects very little of the language, vision, and policy and program recommendations raised by the community. While some great programs are mentioned as models, the overall plan relies on old and ineffective strategies dominated by case management and increased system coordination combined with *predominantly* law enforcement oversight and implementation.

It is for these reasons that we are distributing and promoting Welcome Home L.A.

Contact us to:

- Discuss the ideas presented here;
- Speak directly to system involved people and our families;
- Meet youth returning home as well as liberated lifers who have been inside since they were teens;
- Endorse this plan; and/or
- Join the effort to push for its adoption.



A plan developed by formerly incarcerated youth and our families, victims of violence and community and faith-based organizations that serve people returning to the community from juvenile halls, Probation camps, jails and prisons.