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Counties Respond to U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on Prison Overcrowding

The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling today, which orders the state of California to reduce its prison population by tens of thousands in an orderly fashion over the next two years, is a wake-up call. Now, more than ever, counties urge the Legislature to act swiftly on the Governor's budget proposal and related constitutional amendment that give counties the funding and protection needed to provide appropriate services, supervision, and sanctions to the offenders returning to our communities. A properly funded and protected realignment of services is the only logical way to comply with the court's order AND continue to provide for public safety.

"These offenders will be returning to our communities perhaps sooner than we'd planned," said Riverside County Supervisor and CSAC President John Tavaglione. "Counties need to be prepared and have the resources to ensure that the services and programs in place to assure an orderly transition, more successful offender reintegration, and maintained public safety."

The provisions of AB 109 – the public safety realignment measure that outlines the shift to local responsibility of specified low-level offenders, a portion of the adult parole population, and the remaining youthful offender population – would, when properly funded, give counties a solid foundation to assume these new responsibilities. Coupled with sustained investment in local public safety programs – programs for which funding runs out, absent legislative action, in five weeks' time – our local systems can do a better job.

Yolo County Supervisor and CSAC First Vice President Mike McGowan commented that "today's ruling underscores the imperative for implementing a funded realignment program. We ask the Legislature to take immediate action so that counties have the tools to manage offenders locally – particularly in the face of the high court's ruling."

A link to the court's opinion in this historic case can be found [here](#).

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