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In Neighborhoods

BUILDING A **HEALTHY** SACRAMENTO

Changing Records, Enriching Communities

Prop. 47 savings will fund social services

BY KATE GONZALES

While there is disagreement over how much money has been saved through Proposition 47, one thing is certain: Those savings will fund programs to benefit communities statewide.

California voters passed Prop. 47 in November 2014. The proposition reduced some nonviolent property and drug offenses from felonies to misdemeanors and allowed for the re-sentencing of inmates who were incarcerated when it passed.

The law also mandated that Prop. 47 savings be invested in the newly created Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund. Money will be distributed annually through grants, to support recidivism reduction programs, truancy and dropout prevention programs and trauma recovery centers. The first deposit to the new fund will be in July.

These changes in the criminal justice system resulted in a decrease in inmates — an estimated reduction of 4,700 prisoners in 2015-16. Gov. Jerry Brown's administration and the Legislative Analyst's Office agree on that number. They disagree on how that number translates to dollars saved.

An LAO report released in February says the Department of Finance's projected cost savings of \$62.7 million is low, and actual savings is closer to \$135 million. If the LAO is right, that's significantly more funding for community services.

Danielle Williams, community organizer with Sacramento Area Congregations Together (Sacramento ACT), says the city needs those services to re-integrate former convicts and keep people out of jail in the first place.

“PEOPLE WHO GET OUT [OF PRISON] NEED SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO FULLY REHABILITATE, OR THEY GO RIGHT BACK INTO THE SYSTEM.”

Danielle Williams, Community Organizer, Sacramento Area Congregations Together

“Sacramento is a prime example where you see our challenges with homelessness and mental health are all intertwined with our criminal justice,” Williams says. “People who get out [of prison] need services and support to fully rehabilitate, or they go right back into the system.”

Sacramento ACT's work to mobilize and advocate for the successful implementation of Prop. 47 is partially funded through The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities initiative. The organization



In November, Sacramento ACT employees and other organizations gathered to celebrate the anniversary of the passage of Prop. 47. Photo by Anne Stokes

is pushing for the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors to transparently document local Prop. 47 savings.

Sacramento ACT and other organizations are hosting a tour during which they will informally gather opinions on how money saved through Prop. 47 should be spent in Sacramento. Those who need help processing forms to have their criminal records changed, or want information about employment, housing, mental health or re-entry services are encouraged to attend.

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

In 2010, The California Endowment launched a 10-year, \$1 billion plan to improve the health of 14 challenged communities across the state. Over the 10 years, residents, community-based organizations and public institutions will work together to address the socioeconomic and environmental challenges contributing to the poor health of their communities.

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88

Your **ZIP code** shouldn't predict how long you'll live — but it does. Staying healthy requires much more than doctors and diets. Every day, our surroundings and activities affect how long — and how well — we'll live.

Health Happens in Neighborhoods. Health Happens in Schools.
Health Happens with Prevention.

I AM PROP 47 RECORD RECLASSIFICATION AND EXPUNGEMENT RESOURCE TOUR

Saturday, April 23, Sam and Bonnie Pannell
Community Center, 2450 Meadowview Road

Saturday, May 21, Unity Church, 9249 Folsom Blvd.

Saturday, June 25, McClatchy Park, 3500 Fifth Ave.

Each event is from noon to 4 p.m.

For more information, call 916-470-2077.

The HUB
Building Healthy Communities
www.SacBHC.org

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