

NO on Proposition 9 Criminal Justice System. Victims' Rights. Parole

Proposition 9 is an unnecessary, harmful proposal that would make drastic changes to California's prison system. It is redundant in that it would duplicate current victims' rights laws, and it could impose a costly burden on a state that is already in a deep budget crisis.

Californians are understandably concerned about safety and sympathize with crime victims and their families. But Proposition 9 is not the answer.

Proposition 9:

- Expands rights of crime victims at the expense of the rights of the accused and the convicted.
- Is unnecessary: California already has strong victims' rights laws.
- Probably violates federal court orders on early release, when appropriate, to reduce prison crowding.
- Conflicts with federal court orders on parole revocation issues, concerning the right to timely hearings and legal representation of parolees.
- Reduces the possibility of rehabilitation of offenders.
- Unnecessarily changes California's already strict parole system. The annual parole rate of those convicted of second degree murder or manslaughter has been less than 1 percent of those eligible for the past 20 years.

The state Constitution is the wrong place for a detailed listing of victims' rights. A general statement is appropriate for the Constitution; the details should be in state law.