

## MEDIA ADVISORY

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SACRAMENTO, Feb. 9, 2021 - Today the [California Committee on the Revision of the Penal Code](#) delivered its inaugural Report and Recommendations to the Governor and State Legislature. The Report includes a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of California's criminal legal system and recommends 10 reforms, which together impact almost every area of California's criminal law.

(Report attached as PDF.)

The Committee recommendations include:

- Ending mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent crimes
- Limiting sentence enhancements
- Reforming parole rules
- Ending longer punishment for people with mental illness
- Providing sentence reconsideration after 15 years of incarceration

The Report follows eight public hearings with over 50 witnesses, including Gov. Gavin Newsom, former Gov. Jerry Brown, Attorney General Xavier Becerra, leaders from all major law enforcement agencies, civil rights organizations, system impacted people, crime victims, and leading scholars and academics. The Committee's recommendations are supported by a wide spectrum of stakeholders and newly available data and empirical research.

When Gov. Newsom swore in Committee members on January 24, 2020, he urged the Committee to pay special attention to racial inequities in California's justice system.

According to Committee Chair Michael Romano the Committee's guiding principle is "to develop policies that maximize public safety and fairness while avoiding unnecessary, cruel, and costly incarceration."

Among other things, the report includes:

- Comments and reform priorities from state leadership, other stakeholders, and leading academics and researchers.
- New data analysis, including evidence of extreme racial disparities. For example, new data reveals that 99% of people sentenced under California’s gang enhancement statute from Los Angeles are people of color.
- Comparisons California criminal laws and those from other states.

The Committee’s research is made possible in part by the Committee’s special data-gathering authority, cooperation with other state agencies, and philanthropic support. The Committee is especially grateful to the [Chan Zuckerberg Initiative](#) (CZI) and [Arnold Ventures](#) for supporting the Committee’s empirical research and analysis, including a research partnership with the [California Policy Lab](#).

“Having a deeper, more analytical understanding of California’s criminal legal system and its impact — rooted in lived experience and real-world challenges — is crucial to making informed decisions about the State’s Penal Code,” said Osi Imeokparia, Interim Head of Justice & Opportunity and Vice President, Technology at the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. “We’re proud to have supported CRPC’s vision to create better outcomes for all Californians through essential policy changes, ones that advocates across the state have been urging for years.”

“We applaud the Committee for their ambitious and rigorous approach to reimagining the state’s Penal Code,” said Amy Solomon, Vice President of Criminal Justice at Arnold Ventures. “These initial recommendations, informed by extensive data analysis and the experiences of those impacted by the justice system, represent a bold first step in reducing incarceration levels and racial disparities throughout the criminal legal system.”

The Committee members are: Michael Romano (chair), Sen. Nancy Skinner, Ass’m. Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Hon. Carlos Moreno, Hon. Peter Espinoza, University of Irvine Law School Dean Song Richardson, and Sen. John Burton (ret.).

The Committee is a permanent standing body established by Cal. Gov’t Code Section 8280. Committee materials, including video recordings of all public hearings, are available at the Committee’s [website](#).