



UCSA Resolution in Opposition to SB 105

WHEREAS, the state of California houses one of the largest prison populations in the nation and has the highest recidivism rate in the nation at 67.5%, leading to such overcrowding that the U.S. Supreme Court mandated that steps be taken towards reducing the prison population in order to comply with constitutional standards; and

WHEREAS, the majority of inmates in California prisons are charged with nonviolent, low-level offenses, with 31% being drug related; and

WHEREAS, California spends more per person to incarcerate its citizens than it does to educate them, at \$47,102 per inmate compared to \$8,482 per student, ranking 49th in the nation in adjusted per pupil expenditures; and

WHEREAS, over the past few years, the increase in funding for prisons has accompanied the state's steady disinvestment from higher education, making the financial decisions that affect the correctional system an issue for students; and

WHEREAS, institutional barriers lead to thousands of Californians, overwhelmingly people of color, being incarcerated, preventing them from pursuing higher education; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 105, supported by Governor Jerry Brown, would seek to evade the process of freeing prisoners as per the Supreme Court's orders by shipping prisoners out of state and leasing new prison areas; and

WHEREAS, over the past several years, Governor Brown's quixotic pursuit of roundabout solutions to the issues outlined by the Supreme Court has cost Californians millions of dollars in taxpayer money while producing an environment for prisoners that Amnesty International likens to "toying with people's lives"¹; and

WHEREAS, alternatives ranging from rehabilitation to counseling are far more effective ways of stemming the issue of recidivism, as demonstrated by the comparative recidivism rates of practically every developed nation in the world; and

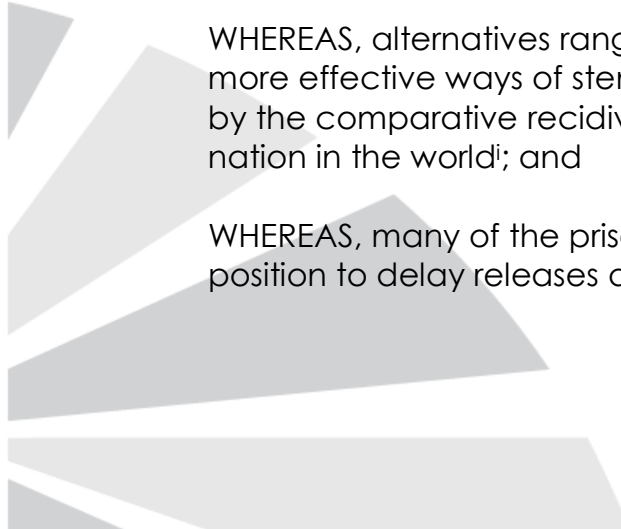
WHEREAS, many of the prisoners affected by Governor Brown's stated position to delay releases are low-risk prisoners; and

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WHEREAS, the \$315 million required for implementation of the counterproductive SB 105 would almost certainly require a fiscal compromise on critical social services that could include education;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the UCSA Board of Directors strongly opposes SB 105; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UCSA urges lawmakers to consider legislative solutions that actively recognize, and follow, the optimal ways of reducing recidivism; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the UCSA President, Legislative Chair, and Legislative Vice-Chair will jointly draft a letter to Governor Brown, Senator Steinberg, and Speaker Perez that clearly articulates the issues that preclude SB 105 from being a reasonable, judicious, and productive approach to overcrowding in California's prisons.

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<http://www.amnestyusa.org/news/news-item/usa-california-prison-authorities-'toying-with-the-lives-of-inmates-on-hunger-strike>

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