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# California Legislature



## JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE DAVID A. ALVAREZ, CHAIR

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COMMITTEE SECRETARY

October 14, 2023

Grant Parks  
California State Auditor  
621 Capitol Mall, Suite 1200  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Audit of Los Angeles County Probation Department – Committee Rule 18

Dear Mr. Parks:

In accordance with Rule 18 of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, I am asking your office to move forward with the enclosed urgent audit request regarding the Los Angeles County Probation Department. This audit is aimed at providing transparency and oversight to the department's revenues and expenditures and efforts to support the influx of additional youth resulting from juvenile justice realignment. I ask and trust that you will prioritize it appropriately.

Should you have any questions, please contact Committee staff at (916) 319-3300.

Sincerely,

**DAVID ALVAREZ**, Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee  
Assemblymember, 80<sup>th</sup> District

Enclosure

cc: Members, Joint Legislative Audit Committee  
Robert Rivas, Speaker, California State Assembly  
Toni Atkins, Pro Tempore, California State Senate  
Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr., Assemblymember, 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Miguel Santiago, Assemblymember, 54<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

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# Assembly California Legislature

  
**REGINALD BYRON JONES-SAWYER, SR.**  
CHAIR, ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT

**COMMITTEES**  
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CHAIR: STATUS OF BOYS AND MEN  
OF COLOR  
2028 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC  
GAMES  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
HOMELESSNESS  
NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS

October 3, 2023

The Honorable David Alvarez, Chair  
California Joint Legislative Audit Committee  
1020 N St, Room 107  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RECEIVED 10-5-2023

**RE: Committee Rule 18 Audit Request: Los Angeles County Probation  
Department**

Dear Assemblymember Alvarez:

We respectfully request the Joint Legislative Audit Committee approve an emergency audit to evaluate funding streams and expenditures of the Los Angeles County Probation Department. It should also include a review of County plans to fund and support the influx of additional youth as a result of realignment.

There are a number of recent developments that necessitate this audit request. First, the State has announced plans to close the Department of Juvenile Justice, which traditionally housed youth with more serious offenses. Those youth will now be relocated to juvenile probation in counties near their home prior to incarceration. Los Angeles County Probation stands to receive a large number of these youths that often require more intensive services.

In addition, there have been multiple reports on staffing challenges in the probation department. By examining funding streams, we will be able to determine if adequate resources are being spent on staffing and other operations.

Finally, and most disturbingly, a May 1, 2023 Los Angeles Times article titled, "Decades of failures leave L.A. County facing up to \$3 billion in sex abuse claims" details very deep problems in the operations of the Probation Department dating back over 50 years. While the potential county liability is not all attributable to the Probation Department, the article does highlight as many as 3,000 claims for sexual abuse in need of resolution between county foster homes, children shelters, probation camps and juvenile halls. Lawyers representing the victims report individuals being threatened with extra time if abuse was reported and rewarded for staying quiet. This clearly indicated a massive operational failure.

We respectfully request that the Joint Legislative Audit Committee endorse an audit to review the following:

1. Identify all revenues and expenditures related to juvenile facilities and preventative and rehabilitation functions provided to LA County from July 2018 through December 2023 or most recent information available, including identifying the primary sources of those revenues and determining how the County has prioritized or adjusted its spending in light of juvenile justice realignment.
2. Evaluate the County of Los Angeles' "Youth Justice Reimagined" planning and implementation efforts to fund and support the influx of additional youth resulting from juvenile justice realignment.
3. Determine whether the county spent state "Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant" funds (WIC 1990-1995) in accordance with state law and applicable grant conditions.

Because emergency audits under rule 18 of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee are limited to a cost of \$290,000, this request allows the State Auditor to modify or decrease the scope of this audit to remain within the monetary limit.

Thank you for your consideration. If you need any further information, please contact Michael Lucien at [Michael.Lucien@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Michael.Lucien@asm.ca.gov) or (916) 319-2057.

Sincerely,

Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr,  
Chair, Asm. Committee on Public Safety  
57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Miguel Santiago  
54<sup>th</sup> Assembly District