

A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE EDUCATION AROUND PROPOSITION 47

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WHEREAS, the State of California's divestment from public higher education in the last 30 years, due in part to skyrocketing costs involved with the prison-industrial complex, has stifled the ability of UCLA to admit and educate undergraduate and graduate students without undue financial burden to them; and

WHEREAS, the goal for state-funded education in California is to provide world-class education through adulthood and ensure that all Californians have equal access to public education; and

WHEREAS, California spends more on prisons than on education, spending \$47,102 per inmate compared to \$8,667 per student¹, ranking 49th in the nation in adjusted per pupil expenditures, and the funding for both components are inversely linked²; and

WHEREAS, the State's fiscal misprioritization, created in large part by our disproportionate spending on corrections and prison construction, has led to dramatically decreased funding for higher education and thus repeated fee increases that have damaged the accessibility, affordability, and quality of the UC system; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans make up 13% of the population, 14% of drug users, but make up of 56% of incarcerations of drug related crimes; and³

WHEREAS, Latino males make up 36% of the California adult male population, but they make up 41% of the California male prison population.⁴

WHEREAS, foreign-born Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs) make up 64.6% of API prisoners, predominantly immigrants and refugees from Vietnamese, Pilipino, Pacific Islander, Laotian communities, who face significant barriers to participating in American society because of language and cultural differences; and⁵

¹ <http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2012/04/05/458148/california-spends-six-times-more-on-prison-inmates-than-on-college-students>

² http://edsources.org/2013/california-drops-to-49th-in-school-spending-in-annual-ed-week-report-2/63654#.VEiY_ZPF9uE

³ http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/dp_cracktestimonyhouse.pdf

⁴ http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_show.asp?i=702

⁵ <http://apscinfo.wordpress.com/2010/10/07/ca-api-prison-population/>

WHEREAS, felony convictions have had a devastating impact in immigrant communities by separating families and disallowing integration and re-integration into society; and⁶

WHEREAS, LGBT prisoners are three times more likely to experience abuse and sexual assault than straight-identified inmates; and⁷

WHEREAS, since the beginning of The War on Drugs in 1970, the disparity between crack cocaine and powder cocaine sentencing has been 100:1, and crack cocaine possession and use has been consistently enforced as a felony punishment; and⁸

WHEREAS, these iniquities, in addition to mandatory minimum sentencing, the rise in for-profit private prisons, and discriminatory policing, have led to youth of color becoming disproportionately represented in prisons, with 3 out of every 4 inmates being men of color; and⁹

WHEREAS, funneling people - especially youth - of color into prisons instead of institutions of higher learning is a threat to the diversity of the university, to the economic stability of the State, and to the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 47, also known as the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act, is a proposed voter initiative for the November 2014 California ballot that will change sentencing for low-level nonviolent crimes such as simple drug possession and petty theft from felonies to misdemeanors and direct financial savings to K-12 schools, mental health services, and victim services; and¹⁰

WHEREAS, the savings from Proposition 47 will generate up to half a billion dollars for K-12 programs and services over the next eight years; and¹¹

WHEREAS, other large institutions, such as the LA Times and Los Angeles Unified School Districts, have taken stances to support state-funded education and Proposition 47; and^{12 13}

WHEREAS, the Undergraduate Students Association Council has publicly endorsed the All of Us campaign, a mental health campaign aimed to break the stigma around mental health and prioritize and expand mental health services; and

⁶<http://www.caasf.org/2014/10/press-release-asian-and-pacific-islander-civil-rights-organization-announce-support-for-proposition-47-invest-in-schools-not-prisons/>

⁷ http://transequality.org/PDFs/JailPrisons_Resource_FINAL.pdf

⁸ <https://www.aclu.org/fair-sentencing-act>

⁹ http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/rd_stateratesofinbyraceandethnicity.pdf

¹⁰ https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/unitedforprop47/pages/22/attachments/original/1411611017/Prop_47_FactSheet-1pager.pdf?1411611017

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/endorsements/la-ed-end-proposition-47-20141007-story.html>

¹³ <http://intersectionssouthla.org/story/la-school-district-endorses-proposition-47-to-reduce-punishment-for-common-crimes/>

WHEREAS, sixty-five percent of the revenue generated from the passage of Proposition 47 will be funneled into statewide mental health services, meaning nearly \$1 billion will be directed towards mental health services within six years; and¹⁴

WHEREAS, the Undergraduate Students Association Council has publicly endorsed 7000 in Solidarity, a campaign against sexual assault and providing quality services to sexual assault survivors; and

WHEREAS, ten percent of the revenue generated from the passage of Proposition 47 will be funneled into victim, or survivor, services; and¹⁵

WHEREAS, the Undergraduate Students Association Council has publicly endorsed the IGNITE (Invest in Graduations, Not Incarceration, Transform Education) campaign, including the support of state legislation that would change sentencing guidelines for low-level nonviolent crimes; and¹⁶

WHEREAS, the Undergraduate Students Association Council recognizes, as a part of endorsing the IGNITE campaign, the importance of dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline and prioritizing education over incarceration, and Proposition 47 coincides with these goals and all of those aforementioned;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Students Association Council of University of California, Los Angeles supports Proposition 47 on the November ballot; and

FINALLY, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Students Association Council of University of California, Los Angeles will take it upon themselves to ensure that the student population is educated about Proposition 47 when going to the polls on November 4th.

¹⁴ https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/unitedforprop47/pages/22/attachments/original/1411611017/Prop_47_FactSheet-1pager.pdf?1411611017

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ <https://www.usac.ucla.edu/documents/resolutions/IGNITEResolutionEdited.pdf>