

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

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Support for Senate Bill 731: Sunsetting Criminal Records

As LA County moves forward with a “care first, jails last” approach to public safety, it is also inclusive of those who are released and return to their family and communities.

Unfortunately, there are 8 million people in California of the 70 million in the country who have a past conviction or arrest on their record. In California, the individual’s criminal records are maintained until the person reaches 100 years of age—well beyond the average life span.

Our criminal justice system is one that harms, disenfranchises, and oppresses communities of color, especially those who are Black or Latinx. In the LA County jails, 80% of those incarcerated are Black or Latinx. The marginalization and oppression continue even after the individual is released.

Senators Durazo and Bradford introduced Senate Bill (SB) 731 which would create a comprehensive process to automatically seal conviction and arrest records in California. As amended on March 3, 2021, SB 731 would 1) automatically seal all arrest

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records that do not result in convictions; 2) direct the California Department of Justice to expand record sealing to all sentences following completion of terms of incarceration, post-release supervision, and an additional period of time, provided the person has completed their sentence without any new felony convictions and has no new charges pending; and 3) retroactively provide the same opportunities for sealing relief for individuals convicted on or after January 1, 1973.

This bill would open opportunities that have historically been closed due to someone's record. Care first is also about second chances and removing obstacles and barriers for people to thrive and succeed. The passage of this bill would not only allow justice-involved individuals to be self-sufficient, help their families, but provide our communities with much needed fiscal support.

Due to these unfair and repressive restrictions, the State loses out on almost \$20 billion dollars annually due to the unemployment and underemployment of those with an arrest or conviction record.

Research, studies, and uplifted narratives share the same theme that if we want to reduce recidivism, we need to make sure that those who are justice-involved can be employed, educated, and housed. This is how we keep the public safe.

I THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Los Angeles County's Legislative Advocates in Sacramento to support of SB 731 (Durazo), which would create a comprehensive system to sunset arrest and conviction records.

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