

CURB Prison Spending Toolkit

For Sub5 Budget Committees



Letter Writing Toolkit

SEND EMAILS TO CA BUDGET COMMITTEE AND GOVERNOR NEWSOM

[Bit.ly/Sub5Toolkit](http://bit.ly/Sub5Toolkit)

Purpose

This **Monday, March 21st** the Assembly Sub 5 committee is holding a hearing to discuss CDCR's state-owned prison construction plans.

Starting March 17th, we'll be sending letters to the CA Legislature AND Governor Newsom to tell them to STOP rubber stamping CDCR's outrageous spending on racist, toxic, deadly prisons.

Take Action Today!

1. Send Email to CA Legislature Assembly Sub5 Budget Committee

See below for EZ Click-to-Send letter

2. Send Email to Governor Newsom

See below for step-by-step instructions and a template letter to send via the Governor's online comment portal

Step 1. Send Email to Assembly Sub5 Budget Committee

Sending a letter to the CA Legislature Budget Committee is easy! Please click each link below, fill out your information, edit the template letter if you want, click "Email Now!" It's that easy.

[CLICK HERE TO SEND LETTER TO BUDGET COMMITTEE](#)

Step 2. Send Email to Governor Newsom

- a. Go to <https://govapps.gov.ca.gov/gov40mail/>
- b. Click "Have Comment" and fill out your name and email address. For the Subject, choose "Budget Proposal 2022-23." Then click "continue."
- c. Choose "Con"
- d. Paste the following message into the Comment Box.
- e. Click "Send Message"

SAMPLE EMAIL SCRIPT:

Dear Governor Newsom:

My name is [xxxxx]. *[If applicable, I'm affiliated with/a member of xxxxx. and/or I am a resident of xxxx/constituent of xxxxx. Optional: add a few additional lines here about why prison closure is important to you.]*

I am writing to urge you to (a) use your executive authority to end or reduce CDCR's infrastructure projects or capital outlay and (b) work with community-based organizations and coalitions like Californians United for a Responsible Budget to enact a thoughtful, methodological plan for prison closure in this state.

Year after year, the California Legislature has asked CDCR to provide a detailed analysis of future prison infrastructure repair needs, as well as a plan for prison consolidation and closure, to help the Legislature make fiscally responsible spending decisions. And year after year, despite seeing a steady decline of the imprisoned population, CDCR has asked for ever more funding and their budget has ballooned. For nearly a decade, CDCR has dragged their feet on developing such a plan. Whether the reason for this is deliberate indifference or department incompetence, our state has wasted billions of dollars as a direct result of CDCR's inaction.

For example, CDCR spent approximately \$90 million at Deuel Vocational Institution (DVI) & California Correctional Center (CCC) on repairs and upgrades between 2017-2020, only for

these institutions to be rightly slated for closure last year by you and your administration. It makes absolutely no sense for CDCR to waste California's tax dollars on repairing prisons that will soon be named for closure and it's impossible for the Legislature to make responsible decisions about spending without a clear plan for prison closure in place. This is just one glaring example of indifference to fiscal responsibility we see from CDCR year after year that ultimately costs taxpayers billions of dollars.

When CDCR finally complied with the legislative mandate to provide a long term outlook report this February 2022, I was shocked by what I read. The CDCR 2021 Master Plan Annual Report does not provide a plan for prison closure or consolidation in response to policy impacts, program needs like healthcare and rehabilitation, or significant declines in our prison population. Instead, the plan includes major projects at every single state prison; 8 infrastructure projects costing \$1.432 billion; 172 Special Repair/Deferred Maintenance Projects costing \$1.410 billion; 24 Energy Projects costing \$19 million; 46 Healthcare Projects costing \$1.131 billion; a grand total of 290 projects that will cost taxpayers \$4 billion. This is particularly outrageous in light of our current prison population, which is approximately 92,650. The last time our prison population was at such levels was 1991, when our state operated 12 fewer prisons and spent \$12 billion less annually on corrections than we do today.

CDCR's refusal to comply with the legislature's request for a prison closure plan is deeply concerning. It indicates that this agency, one of the largest in your administration, believes it has the authority to stand in insubordination of our law making bodies and systems of fiscal accountability.

Governor Newsom, I urge you to intervene on behalf of the majority of Californians who have repeatedly voted for less incarceration and investing resources into the programs and services that truly keep us safe.

CDCR's unchecked growth and flagrant assumption that all of their facilities operating today will continue to operate 10 years from now is not only fiscally irresponsible and out of step with the will of the majority of Californians, but downright embarrassing. CDCR Secretary Allison reports directly to you—what steps is your administration going to take to manage and hold accountable this rogue department?

Without the adoption and implementation of a strategic plan for prison closure that prioritizes public health, labor solutions and social justice—like CURB's People's Plan for Prison Closure—CDCR will keep wasting billions more of our state dollars on nonsensical prison "repairs." I once again urge you to deny all infrastructure requests and I urge you to work with Californians United for a Responsible Budget, who have provided a visionary roadmap for prison closure in this state.

A budget should reveal what we truly value. I look forward to your leadership to ensure that we pass with a budget that reflects Californians' desire for racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice and public health – by rejecting additional funding for state prison infrastructure, continuing to lay the groundwork for additional prison closures, and investing instead in our communities.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider these comments.

Sincerely,

[your name]

Step 3. Join the Sub5 Super Friends Advocacy List!

JOIN OUR FIGHT FOR A HEALTHIER, GREENER, MORE JUST CALIFORNIA!

[Click to receive future Sub5 hearing action alerts, toolkits, and updates](#)