



the inside journal

The Inside Journal shares news about California state laws, CDCR policies, and campaigns pushing for prison abolition; as well as stories and art gathered from Initiate Justice's Inside Members. **In 2024, the journal will be sent to the printer in late February, late May, mid September, and mid October. It takes about three weeks to reach you after it's sent to the printer.**

Who is Initiate Justice?

Initiate Justice is an organization led by people whose lives have been impacted by the California prison system - people who are currently inside, formerly incarcerated, or those who have loved ones inside. We organize, advocate, and build together. We work to make statewide policy change, build relationships with state senators and assemblymembers, and build the world we want to live in. We are 45,000+ Inside Members (like you!), 400+ Inside Organizers, 300+ Outside Organizers, and members and volunteers across California.

What's inside?

- **The Annotated Legislative Process - Pg 2**
- **Authors, CoAuthors and CoSponsors - Pg 3**
- **Policy Corner: Details of our 2024 Legislative Package - Pg 5 & 6**

MEET OUR TEAM!



The Inside Journal Timeline:

We receive thousands of letters every few months, please be patient with responses to mail.

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

If you send us multiple letters asking for a response, it takes us longer to get any answer back to you. We still have to sort, read, and write to duplicated letters. Please write as clearly as possible on new member sign up sheets and letters to us so that our staff and volunteers can read it.

For more letter guidelines see the Initiate Justice Mail Tips & Guidelines attachment.

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EMAIL
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Social Media
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tiktok.com/InitiateJustice

Why do some bills begin with AB and some with SB?

If a bill is introduced by an Assemblymember, then the prefix before the bill number will be AB for Assembly Bill— this means the bill was introduced by an Assemblymember and therefore the Assembly is the House of Origin.

If a bill is introduced by a Senator, then the prefix before the bill number will be SB for Senate Bill— this means the bill was introduced by a Senator and therefore the Senate is the House of Origin.

All bills must pass out of their House of Origin before they can move on to the second house.

For example, since our new bill AB 2310 (Hart) was introduced by Assemblymember Gregg Hart, the Assembly is this bill's House of Origin, therefore it must first pass through the Assembly, and then the Senate.

We're grateful that we are able to answer all of your questions when you write to us! Don't forget to check out our Initiate Justice Mail Tips & Guidelines attachment to learn more!



A few notes on the Annotated California Legislative Process!

See the Annotated CA Legislative Process attachment. The CA Legislative Process indicates the necessary steps a bill must take in order to become a law in California. This time, we've annotated the guide for you with key dates and notes!

Here are additional things to keep in mind when looking at the guide:

General Initiate Justice things to note:

- This annotated version of the CA Legislative Process is for 2024 only.
- After the journal is sent to the printer, it takes about three weeks to reach your hands.

Policy-related things to note:

- If a bill does not make it past a step by the noted deadline, the bill **does not** move forward.
- Most criminal justice reform bills are referred to the Public Safety Committee, but are sometimes referred more than once and are sent to committees like the Elections Committee.
- Bills need 5/8 votes to pass the Assembly Public Safety Committee and 3/5 to pass the Senate Public Safety Committee.

We encourage you to read the guide carefully and keep it with you so that you can know where we are every time you receive an update from us through *The Inside Journal*!

Tip: If you have any questions, reach out to an Inside Organizer in your yard/building.

2024 is an important election year!

This year, community members across the country will have the opportunity to vote in both the primary election and the general presidential election.

During this time, it's important to remind our eligible loved ones to register to vote and cast their vote on the State, Local, Judiciary, and national leaders that we think will best serve our communities.

We challenge you to remind TWO loved ones on the outside or who are coming home who are eligible to vote to register!

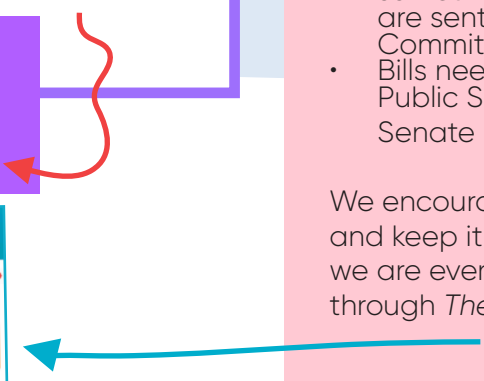
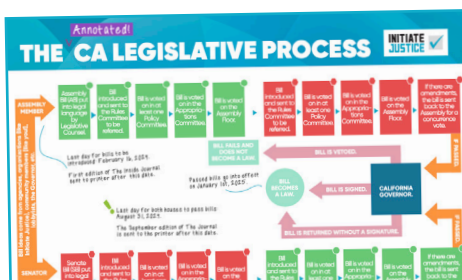
Don't forget! Californians on parole can now vote due to the passing of Proposition 17 in 2020.

Register to vote by visiting:

www.RegisterToVote.CA.Gov

Or call the national voter hotline:

1-800-345-VOTE (8683)



Authors, CoAuthors, and CoSponsors—what is the difference?

A bill's author is the Assemblymember or Senator that is introducing the bill. Some bills will have CoAuthors, meaning they are being introduced by more than one Legislator. CoSponsors, like Initiate Justice, are organizations that add their name as a supporter of that bill.

CoSponsors help develop the legislation, inform authors and our communities on the issue at hand, and advocate for its success. However, it's important to note that bill authors have the ultimate say over bills and sometimes have different opinions than CoSponsors. CoSponsors are especially important so that the Legislature is hearing directly from system impacted people and their loved ones.

It's also important to note that, just like CoSponsors sign on to ensure bills successfully pass, there are also opponents who advocate for the bill to not pass. Some examples include members of the Legislature, law enforcement, and other community organizations.

This is why Initiate Justice encourages all system impacted individuals, like yourself and your loved ones on the outside, to join organizations like Initiate Justice, so we can collectively give the bill the best chance at passing.

Wellness Corner: Let's aim for the stars!

At Initiate Justice, we have what we call North Star goals. That means, ongoing goals we strive to accomplish that guide our work always. **Some are: continuously centering and empowering system-impacted individuals to ensure our voices are heard; building safe, whole, and just communities; seeing a world where incarceration is not the end-all solution to harm.**

What are your North Star goals? We encourage you to envision them, write them in the stars, and reach for them!

What does it mean to be system-impacted?

To us, a system-impacted person is anyone personally and materially affected by incarceration. This includes currently incarcerated people, formerly incarcerated people, and their loved ones.

As a policy organization, it's important to remind voters and legislators that our systems of punishment meaningfully affect more than just those currently incarcerated. This is how we're able to pass policy like Prop 17, where we were able to show how the costs of incarceration continue well after coming home, and affect thousands of households. Prop 17 restored voting rights to everyone on parole, increasing the political power and voice of people returning home.

We center currently-incarcerated people, but we are stronger together when people inside and outside direct their energy in unified ways for the same goals - passing legislation, building community and power.



Graduates of the Institute of Impacted Leaders Contra Costa County Cohort!

IJ team members at the Institute of Impacted Leaders Inland Empire graduation!



Artwork from our Inside Members



Created by: Flor G.



Created by: Louie J.

A poem by Jessie Milo— an Inside Organizer with Initiate Justice

Initiate Justice
 No longer just us
 more forgiveness
 Less Judging
 More Kindness
 More Loving
 Working Together
 to make our communities better
 Do reflections, make corrections
 letting compassion be our complexion
 Initiate Justice
 Its no longer just us.

-Jessie Milo



Created by: Jose L.

policy corner

A message from our Policy Team:

2024 is going to be a difficult year for our work.

Tough-on-crime approaches to Public Safety are becoming popular again and several criminal justice reform issue areas are vulnerable. There's also a very large deficit in California's budget and the elections are coming up later this year in November.

We will continue to prioritize our CoSponsored bills, while also working to defeat bad bills so they don't become law and harm our movement.

PASSED: ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

2023
BILL!

AB 544 (Bryan): Voting in Jail

AB 544 (Bryan) was introduced last year and is still part of our bill package.

This bill will establish polling centers in county jails and require county jails to provide voter registration forms to eligible incarcerated voters.

The bill was amended to become a pilot program in 3 counties and passed the Assembly floor on Monday, January 29, 2024.

AB 1186 (Bonta): Youth Restitution

2023
BILL!

This bill will replace youth restitution with a more sustainable and accessible system of compensation for crime survivors by ensuring timely payments from the California Victim Compensation Board while holding youth accountable in appropriate ways that do not involve them paying money. Instead, youth will participate in restorative justice conferences, perform community service, or be connected to job opportunities.

The bill was strategically held by the author and will move forward later this year.

AB 2065 (Kalra): Racial Justice Act Data

NEW
BILL!

This bill will improve access to county-by-county data outcomes needed for RJA claims. The bill will also require the Department of Justice, CDCR, and Judicial Council to include statistics in a machine readable format for further analysis.

AB 2310 (Hart): Parole Language Access

NEW
BILL!

This bill will ensure that parole candidates are able to fully participate in Board Hearings in their native language, if it's not English. This bill will require the Board of Parole Hearings to translate all relevant documents in the most common non-English languages and provide qualified interpreters in hearings.

#WeFightForUs

We had a great time in February for our very first Volunteer Night of the year! We're so grateful for the continued support from our community members!



policy corner

**NEW
BILL!**

AB 2483 (Ting): General Resentencing Procedures

This bill will establish general legal and administrative procedures that apply to all resentencings. The bill will require stakeholders such as judges and public defenders to meet and collaborate in advance of any new resentencing law, and require that CDCR assist litigants with obtaining institutional records.

An update on ACA 4 (Bryan): Voting Rights in Prison

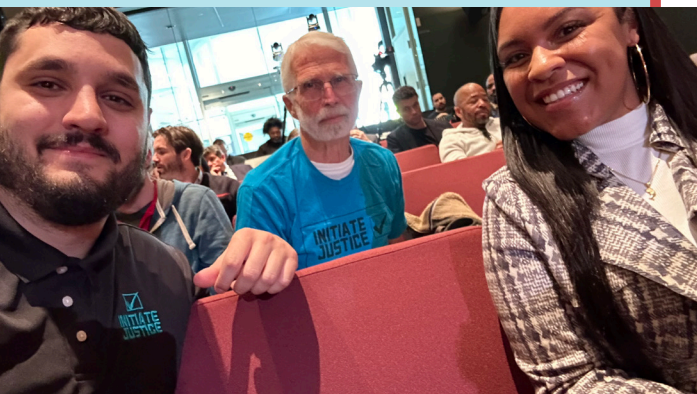
We are disappointed to announce that ACA 4 (Bryan) **will not** be moving forward in the Legislature and won't appear on the ballot in 2024.

With the increased tough-on-crime approaches, ACA 4 (Bryan) did not have the support to make it through the Legislature.

We know this is a path towards the liberation of voices that have been marginalized for countless years, this is why The Free the Vote Coalition is committed to continuing efforts towards expanding voting rights and voting access to thousands of incarcerated people across California.

Over the course of the next few years, we will assess the best path moving forward to ensure we have a California democracy that is inclusive of all voices.

#DemocracyNeedsEveryone



The above photos are from the Assembly Select Committee on Retail Theft.

Our Policy Director, Greg, along with our Executive Director, Antoinette, and community organizers were in attendance to ensure system-impacted voices were heard!

**NEW
BILL!**

AB 2833 (McKinnor): Restorative Justice Confidentiality

This bill will establish comprehensive admissibility protections and thus ensure that information shared during a Restorative Justice session will not be admissible in future legal proceedings.

**NEW
BILL!**

AB 1986 (Bryan): CDCR Book Bans

This bill will require the Inspector General to post the list of books that have been banned by CDCR on the office's internet website. The bill will also authorize the Inspector General to review banned books and determine whether there is a legitimate penological reason for the book to be banned, and if not, to remove the book from the banned list.