

Limiting the Use of Sentencing Enhancements

WHEREAS for generations, severe and unbalanced sentencing policies have had a devastating impact on Black, Latino and Indigenous Californians, including the use of many excessively harsh enhancements that disproportionately harms people in low-income communities of color, keeping people in prison long after they pose any safety risk to their community and contributing to our massive and aging prison population; and

WHEREAS the tough-on-crime era in the 1990s brought a flood of discriminatory enhancements and excessive sentencing practices, which are outdated, incoherent, and applied unfairly, severely exacerbating racial disparities in our criminal justice system with no compelling evidence that overly harsh sentencing policies improve public safety; and

WHEREAS limiting the use of sentencing enhancements is supported by the California Democratic Party Platform which states “we are committed to eliminating racial and economic disparities within the criminal justice system and to ending mass incarceration in California prisons and jails” and declares that criminal justice reform must incorporate every aspect of the criminal justice system, including charging, sentencing and diversion;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the California Democratic Party supports reforming our justice system to end the legacy of discriminatory mass incarceration by limiting the use of enhanced sentencing which has contributed to excessively lengthy prison terms disproportionately affecting low income individuals and people of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Democratic Party shall communicate this resolution to California’s 58 District Attorneys and the California District Attorneys Association.

Submitted and Authored by:
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