



April 18, 2017

Assembly Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street (LOB), Room 111
Sacramento, California 95814

VIA: PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Good morning chairman and assembly members. My name is Daniel Cano representing the Greenlining Institute. Greenlining is an multiethnic policy organization committed to advancing racial and economic justice and we support AB 1344.

We also supported AB 149 passed in 2013, which requires county probation departments to post the link of the California's voter guide for people with records on their website or have a notice of the link in each probation offices. We need to further implement this bill. For example, Alameda, San Joaquin, and San Diego County have accessible and working links to the voter's guide. On the other hand, Los Angeles, Kern, and Stanislaus County do not. We need to take steps beyond an internet link. We need honest and direct forms of raising awareness for civic engagement.

This is where AB 1344 comes into play. Given that people of color make up the state's majority, voting demographics should reflect that. But there's a challenge. People of color, particularly, boys and young men of color, disproportionately are victims of the carceral state. Misinformation about their civic engagement further marginalizes an already disenfranchised population. Requiring the department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide the most updated version of a voting rights guide to parolees will clarify when and how they can vote.

Research shows that re-integration reduces recidivism. Voting rights is tied to housing, health, and jobs. It's tied to empowering folks with records to fully contribute to their community.

In Alameda County, we have worked with community partners in developing strategies to bolster a health career pipeline for folks with records. The county has committed to supporting 1400 jobs for reentry individuals. This type of work exists because we have elected officials who prioritize the rights of the formerly incarcerated.

For me, this work is personal. My uncle is a former felon. I called him recently to discuss what he has been told about his voting rights. The probation officer told my uncle that he can never vote again. This is incorrect. It's been 20 years since he's been off parole. My uncle expressed to me that he would want to vote because what the government does affects his family. This is why providing a voter guide and having probation officers give accurate information is important.

Greenlining supports AB 1344 and respectfully asks for your "Aye" vote. Thank you.