County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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February 10, 2012

The Honorable Christine Kehoe, Chair Senate Appropriations Committee California State Capitol, Room 3191 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT: Assembly Bill 324 (Buchanan) Juvenile Offenders: Recall of Commitment

Dear Senator Kehoe,

The Placer County Board of Supervisors wishes to express our support of AB 324 (Buchanan), a bill that would clarify the law regarding juveniles eligible for commitment at Division of Juvenile Facilities.

This measure is important in that it clarifies law regarding the eligibility requirements for juveniles to be placed in Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities. Currently, only those offenders who have committed a 707(b) offense, regardless of any 290 sexual offenses, are eligible to remain in DJJ facilities. AB 324 restores the intent of the original realignment bills (SB 81 and AB 191) of 2007 to include youthful offenders who have committed 290 offenses, whether or not they have also committed a 707(b) offense. The intent of the original bills was to ensure that serious and violent offenders, *including sexual offenders*, remain in secure DJJ facilities which are more appropriately staffed and equipped to manage this population. AB 324 would ensure that the intent of the original realignment of 2007 is preserved.

Recent interpretation of the law without the correction of this bill could potentially cause the premature release of sexual offenders to counties that are not prepared to handle the new responsibility. Because this is a sensitive issue and a difficult population to place and rehabilitate, the release of these offenders into local custody further taxes and weakens local public safety organizations already struggling with unprecedented funding and staffing level deficits.

In addition, youthful offenders who are currently at DJJ facilities and receiving State run rehabilitative services would be disrupted from these programs and transferred to counties that may not have the capacity to preserve the same level of service.

The Honorable Christine Kehoe, Chair Senate Appropriations Committee California State Senate

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The end result may be young offenders who are unable to complete court-ordered rehabilitation programs as part of their sentences. This causes concerns for communities regarding resources for reentry and potential recidivism.

The Placer County Board of Supervisors urges your support for AB 324, in order to preserve an effective level of public safety service for both juvenile offenders and our communities.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER

Robert M. Weygandt, Supervisor Placer County Board of Supervisors

Cc:

Placer County Board of Supervisors

Thomas M. Miller, Placer County Executive Officer

Holly Heinzen, Chief Assistant Placer County Executive Officer

Senate Appropriation Committee

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