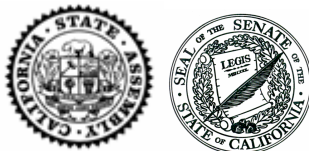


California Legislature



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, June 26, 2008

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Senate and Assembly Republicans Continue Push for Comprehensive Solution to California's Prison Overcrowding Crisis

Republican Proposal Offers Common-Sense Alternative to Build More Prison Beds

Consistent with Republicans' top priority of protecting public safety, Senate and Assembly Republicans today presented a solution to immediately address California's prison overcrowding crisis in a way that is both comprehensive and fiscally-responsible. [Senate Bill 1705](#) by Senator George Runner, of Antelope Valley, would remove obstacles which have delayed implementation of [Assembly Bill 900](#), passed by the Legislature and signed into law last year to build critically needed prison and jail facilities.

"We agree a crisis exists in our prison system which must be addressed immediately, but the state is in no financial position to allow someone unfettered access to \$7 billion dollars without accountability," said Senator Runner.

For several weeks, Republicans have been calling for changes to legislation approved last year. AB 900 authorized a \$7.4 billion bond to relieve the overcrowding problem. Prison bed construction under AB 900 has not yet begun.

"That money has yet to build one bed. Before we write a blank check for more taxpayer dollars, shouldn't we spend what is already allocated? Prison construction must begin immediately to avoid the early release of prisoners. Let's free up the AB 900 money, build beds and work toward a comprehensive solution," said Senate Republican Leader Dave Cogdill, of Modesto.

"Republicans believe we must get the prison construction authorized in AB 900 started without delay, and we must remove the roadblocks that have held up new prison beds and improved inmate health care facilities. We stand ready to work with the prison receiver and our colleagues to craft a solution to improve inmate health care, but we will not shy away from our responsibility to protect public safety or taxpayers," said Assembly Republican Leader Mike Villines, of Fresno.

SB 1705, which would make the necessary changes to AB 900, is currently awaiting approval by the Senate Public Safety Committee.

"Lawmakers must take a complete view at all of our current prison problems, and work together to craft a comprehensive solution that solves our inmate health care problems while fully-utilizing the funds already authorized by the Legislature for prison improvements. The Legislature made a good faith effort last year by passing AB 900 to address California's overcrowded prisons and deficiencies in health care. We must act now

to implement AB 900,” said Assemblyman Todd Spitzer, of Orange, Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Prison Construction and Operations.

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