



CITY OF OAKLAND

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REBECCA KAPLAN
Vice Mayor

NIKKI FORTUNATO BAS
Council President

CARROLL FIFE
Councilmember D3

Date: September 22, 2022
To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public
From: Vice Mayor Kaplan, Council President Fortunato Bas, & Councilmember Fife
Re: **Resolution To Reimagine Alameda County’s Approach To The Youth Justice System**

Dear Colleagues on the City Council and Members of the Public:

Since the closure of the State's Division of Juvenile Justice, both local and state agencies have shifted towards public health approaches in our juvenile justice system, incorporating trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate services. Despite some reforms, the system still disproportionately impacts youth of color and youth who have experienced early childhood trauma. Our youth justice system also does not adequately address the needs of girls, gender expansive youth, and trans youth. Given these pressing challenges, we ask you to join us in supporting the creation of a countywide, community-based planning process to reimagine Alameda County’s approach to youth justice.

Alameda County currently spends between \$500,000 and \$800,000 a year on each youth it detains¹. In addition, Black youth from the City of Oakland are approximately 113 times more likely than white youth to be criminalized and arrested.² Youth of color represent 92% of youth under probation supervision in Alameda County, and for youth from Oakland, youth of color represent 99% of all youth under probation supervision.³

It is clear that our youth justice system disparately impacts youth of color, specifically Black youth. These findings are especially disconcerting, as research affirms the dangerous effects of incarceration on young people⁴.

As an alternative, community-based interventions across the United States and in the Bay Area have demonstrated significant potential as alternative models of accountability. With a community-based, public health approach, we can lead with practices that support healing, allow youth to take responsibility for their mistakes, and improve community safety by supporting the growth and wellbeing of our young people.

This resolution urges the County to create a multi-sector, multi-agency, and community-driven approach to assess and reimagine youth justice in Alameda County. We hope you will join us in supporting this groundbreaking legislation.

¹ “[Alameda County Budget](#).” & “[Juvenile Detention Profile Survey – BSCC](#).” Accessed September 13, 2022.

² “[Alco Data Portal](#).” Accessed August 10, 2022.

³ Ibid.

⁴Barnert ES, Dudovitz R, Nelson BB, Coker TR, Biely C, Li N, Chung PJ. How *Does Incarcerating Young People Affect Their Adult Health Outcomes?*. 2017 Feb;139(2):e20162624. doi: 10.1542/peds.2016-2624. PMID: 28115536; PMCID: PMC5260153.

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