



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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For several years now the topic of prison overcrowding has played out across California. In 2011, AB-109 shifted lower level offenders from the prisons to the county jails. In 2012, Proposition 26 reduced sentences for some criminals under the 1994 “three-strikes” law. Now another attempt to chip away at our criminal justice system is on the ballot. Proposition 47 will reduce penalties again, this time for possession of predatory drugs (commonly referred to as “date-rape” drugs), thefts of firearms, possession of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine and it would soften penalties for fraud.

As your District Attorney, and as your Sheriff, we vehemently oppose Proposition 47 and everything it represents. It appears that the prison overpopulation problems and the California budget issues are answered by reducing the punishment offenders deserve for their crimes. One of our concerns as law enforcement officials is that California is becoming increasingly willing to tolerate crime in our communities. In Tulare County that is not the case, your safety is our priority.

According to the Legislative Analyst’s Office, there is an average of 220,000 felony convictions in California in a year. If Proposition 47 passes, it will impact 40,000 of those criminals. Instead of felonies, the offenders will face misdemeanor charges. It will also release as many as 9,000 inmates who are currently in state prison. Certainly that will have a positive impact on prison overcrowding, however it will also have a far greater impact on the safety of our citizens.

Do not be swayed by terms such as “non-serious” or “non-violent.” Ask a small business owner or a farmer what theft and forgery do to his or her bottom line. If Proposition 47 passes, it will limit forgery to a misdemeanor, regardless of the number of prior theft convictions, if the amount of the loss is lower than \$950. A sexual predator would have little motivation not to possess Rohypnol, Ketamine, or GHB (date-rape drugs) because that would be a misdemeanor no matter how many times the offender was caught with the drugs. Stealing a gun would become a misdemeanor, unless that gun was worth more than \$950. These are the crimes our legislature believes we can tolerate. These are types of criminals that would be returned to our communities.

Please join your District Attorney, Sheriff and every major public safety organization in California, along with the California Retailers Association, California Chamber of Commerce, Rural County Representatives of California, Crime Victims United, and many other courageous California citizens in voting no on Proposition 47.

Tim Ward, District Attorney and Mike Boudreaux, Sheriff