



August 27, 2020

The Honorable Holly Mitchell
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SB 824 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) as amended August 26, 2020; AB 1869 (Committee on Budget) as proposed to be amended August 27, 2020: Criminal administrative fees – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Mitchell and Assembly Member Ting:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we write in support of SB 824 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) and AB 1869 (Committee on Budget). These measures would repeal the authority to collect various criminal justice administrative fees upon conviction or arrest and would also appropriate \$65 million annually for five years to counties to backfill associated revenue losses. Our organizations were previously opposed to SB 144 by Senator Mitchell on fiscal grounds only, arguing that sustainable funding was needed to replace lost revenue resulting from eliminating counties' ability to charge criminal justice related fees and shifting a variety of costs to the counties.

Our organizations share a commitment to helping court-involved individuals succeed in their communities and overcome obstacles to making positive changes. We recognize that today's system of assessing criminal fees is overly complex, and its financial and legal implications are often crippling for those who can least afford them. Our organizations' position on SB 144 was not linked to the proposed restructuring or eliminating fines and fees, but, rather, to the significant and permanent redirection of funding sources that support a diverse set of local programs and services.

Our organizations support SB 824/AB 1869 as these measures address our immediate fiscal concerns that were originally raised relative to SB 144 and provide funding so that counties can continue to deliver essential core services and programs in the near term. We appreciate the Legislature's willingness to work with our organizations, and our collective memberships over the last two years, leading to an approach that resolves our immediate fiscal concerns, improves the criminal justice system, and reduces the disproportionate impact these fees have on those who do not have an ability to pay. Given the complexity of the criminal justice fines and fees construct, we also look forward to any future discussions that may be required to further refine or address any unforeseen or unintended technical challenges resulting from this policy change and identify continuing funding needs. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Josh Gauger in blue ink.

Josh Gauger
CSAC Legislative Representative

Handwritten signature of Elizabeth Espinosa in blue ink.

Elizabeth Espinosa
UCC Legislative Representative

Handwritten signature of Paul Smith in blue ink.

Paul Smith
RCRC Senior Vice President of
Governmental Affairs

SB 824/AB 1869 – Criminal Fees
CSAC, UCC, and RCRC – SUPPORT
August 27, 2020
Page 2

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Members and Consultants, Assembly Budget Committee
Christopher A. Francis, Ph.D., Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Matt Osterli, Senate Republican Fiscal
Jennifer Kim, Assembly Budget Committee
Lyndsay Mitchell, Assembly Republican Caucus
Jessica Devencenzi, Office of the Governor
Amy Jarvis, Department of Finance
Aaron Edwards, Department of Finance