



In the past few years, the transparency movement has resulted in many misguided laws and decrees from the federal government on down to the local governments. This phenomenon has caused a dramatic increase in administrative workload for law enforcement, and the actual mission of crime-fighting and law enforcement strategies seem to have become a less valuable tool for the politicians when it comes to public safety. Along the lines of this fascinating rainbows and unicorn thinking, Assembly Bill 90 was born (Weber-D) that would take CalGang's monitoring duties from the CalGang Executive Board comprised of user agencies and places it under the jurisdiction of the State of CA Department of Justice. While this would not be the death of CalGangs, it would require an oversight committee on which someone previously placed on CalGangs would sit on, along with religious leaders, immigration services representatives and anti-gang violence activists, the CA Public Defender's Association President or his or her designee along with the AG himself, and representatives from participating law enforcement agencies. As I'm writing this, I have to pinch myself to make sure I am not drifting into an altered state of mind and that this is not fiction. No, I'm still right here, feet firmly planted on beautiful California soil and reading proposed CA legislation.

In 2015, the California State auditor's office conducted an audit on CalGangs and four user agencies (LAPD, Santa Ana PD, Sonoma County Sheriff's Department and Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office) and concluded that 13 out of 100 entries lacked proper criteria for entry into CalGangs, 600 individuals had a purge date extending beyond the statutory five-year term, along with a lack of parental and juvenile notification. This small margin of error in data collection, entry and maintenance in a database that has tens of thousands of entries was enough for Assemblywoman Weber to author a bill to address this perceived gross injustice ("author" is a loose reference and only connotes the person carrying the bill).

Most of the errors found in this audit were human errors and not malicious conduct on behalf of law enforcement personnel. Some audit points lacked citation but also addressed valid issues about the lack of uniformity within the program and did address a need for training, creating better technology and software as well as creating proper safeguards for privacy rights and timely purging of individual records as mandated by law. Fair enough so far.

So, how do you address the maladies discovered in the audit? Make suggestions and changes to the existing policies? That's a great idea! Provide training to those using CalGangs? Thank you very much! Make sure that all jurisdictions follow uniform protocols? To maintain the

integrity of the program, we wholeheartedly support uniformity! Unfortunately, the sad real-world solution is to legislate....

This is not an indictment on the auditor's office, but using this logic, should all other interagency law enforcement databases "failing" an inspection based on such a small sampling fall under the jurisdiction of the DOJ? Sounds to me like the transparency folks in power ordered an audit on a predetermined outcome.

This is the type of knee-jerk reaction that goes on in government affairs. Instead of enforcing laws already on the books, and providing that the root of the issue really is simply training and retraining, let's pass more legislation that surely will not help the law-abiding public. Social justice activism at its best, and that is what Dr. Shirley Weber has always been good at. Good for public safety? Of course not, but it will make some bubble dwellers experience a warm and fuzzy feeling when more "oversight" is provided upon the nefarious law enforcement. Makes me wonder if Dr. Weber's constituents will capture the same warm and fuzzy feeling when being victimized by gang members in her district....

If you wonder what other bills Dr. Weber, the chairperson of sub-committee No. 5 on Public Safety, has intended for the safety of Californians, here are some other fine bills authored by her:

AB 1344 – Voting rights; inmates and persons formerly incarcerated. (Requires the Department of Corrections and county probation department to provide voting info to inmates and ex-inmates.)

AB 1448 – Elderly Parole Program (Early release program for the elderly inmates.)

AB 163 – School safety; peace officer interactions with pupils. (A review of LE on campuses and how to reduce their presence in schools.)

AB 1384 – Victims of violent crimes; trauma recovery centers. (Will come in handy when folks in her district get victimized by gang members. Very forward thinking....)

AB 1518 – Criminal justice statistics. (LE oversight and transparency.)

So there we have our representative democracy in action. I'm gonna have to give this one a 3/5 rainbows and unicorns rating on the merit of misplaced priorities....

Stay safe. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at TJTarjamo@lappl.org or contact me at (213) 798-2286.