

From: [Ruthie Abelson Olivas](#)
To: [Comment](#)
Subject: ACA4 Comment
Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 2:45:15 PM

***** EXTERNAL MESSAGE *****

Thank you for your time and service Pinole city council members. I am Ruthie Abelson Olivas. I am a Pinole resident, a board member of the West Contra Costa League of Women Voters, and a true believer in expansive voting rights. I am not speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters but as a Pinole resident.

I am against ACA4 and encourage you to not support it. I could support it if written differently and not so broadly. If there is no language disqualifying serious offenders such as murderers, child molesters, rapists or anyone serving a life sentence, I cannot support this. I would support something like a parole board to determine voting eligibility on an individual basis. There is an inequality within society which leads to many people being imprisoned which I fully understand. I just need this bill to be more thoughtfully implemented.

Thank you!

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Regards,
Ruthie Abelson Olivas
Realtor

Security Pacific Real Estate



EAST BAY FOR EVERYONE

June 20, 2023

Pinole City Council
2131 Pear Street
Pinole, California 94564

RE: Support for the Resolution in Support of ACA 4

Dear Pinole City Councilmembers,

East Bay for Everyone, a membership organization devoted to building just cities through land use, transit and housing policy, is pleased to endorse ACA 4 and to support the Council's resolution on the issue tonight.

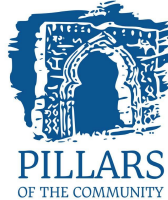
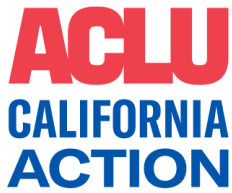
As an organization that works to build just cities, we at East Bay for Everyone recognize the damage that the carceral state inflicts on communities. In 2020, we endorsed Proposition 17 (voting rights for parolees). That year we also took ballot positions to expand voting rights to some teens, confirm California's move away from cash bail, and opposed a ballot measure that would have made sentencing harsher.

In order to create inclusive communities where all residents can thrive, we must allow them to engage in the civic process. Denying the right to vote destroys our social cohesion by creating a second-tier class of residents. History and data have shown that those largely impacted have been communities of color and low-income people. The same communities have historically been negatively impacted by land use, transit, and housing policy. In particular, those coming out of incarceration are also excluded from communities by overt housing discrimination. We believe this bill will encourage such people to engage in their communities and have their input taken into account as we all work to build thriving and inclusive communities in Pinole and across California.

For these reasons, East Bay for Everyone supports ACA 4 and tonight's action. We are committed to bringing about more housing for everyone in Pinole and statewide.

Sincerely,

John Minot (Co-Executive and Steward), and
The 2,000+ members of East Bay for Everyone



June 20, 2023

The Honorable Cameron Sasai
Pinole City Council
2131 Pear St.
Pinole, CA 94564

Re: ACA 4 (Bryan) and AB 1595 (Bryan) Co-Sponsor Support

Dear Councilmember Sasai:

The ACLU California Action, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, California Black Power Network, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Initiate Justice, Initiate Justice Action, Jewish Center for Justice, League of Women Voters of California, and Pillars of The Community write as co-sponsors in support of ACA 4 (Bryan) and its companion bill, AB 1595 (Bryan). We are a broad coalition of grassroots community, civil rights and democracy reform organizations coming together to expand voting accessibility and re-enfranchise all California citizens serving prison terms.

For much of its history, California has taken steps to restrict the rights of both poor and nonwhite citizens. Until 1962, the state refused to ratify the 14th Amendment, which guaranteed equal protection of the law after the Civil War, and the 15th Amendment, which prohibits voting restrictions based on race. But in recent years, California has led the nation in ensuring the right to participate in free and fair elections. Protecting the right to vote – and ensuring that the voices of all citizens are heard, equally and without bias or favoritism, is a core Californian value. As the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled, restrictions on those values and that right “strike at the heart of representative government.”

And yet to this day, California citizens serving a prison term are denied the right to vote. These restrictions emerged as a counterweight to the righteously won efforts to expand the franchise to include people who had previously been denied both their citizenship and personhood. Various methods of disenfranchisement were enacted in many states

across the nation in the aftermath of Reconstruction and the 14th Amendment, as efforts by states to restrict and suppress the voting rights of their Black citizens.

These efforts to restrict voting rights were facially race-neutral – but clear in intent, and maliciously effective. Along with poll taxes, and literacy tests, criminalization and increasing penalties for minor crimes, the effect was exactly as intended – a dramatic and lethal restriction on the political participation of Black, Brown, Poor, and Indigenous communities.

There are states and U.S. territories that allow everyone to participate in the democratic process. Maine, Vermont, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico all allow people in prison to vote. In fact, the United States as a whole is a dramatic outlier in the community of developed global democracies. Nearly all Western European countries allow incarcerated people to vote, as do others around the world, including 28 European nations, Israel, Canada, Zimbabwe, Japan, Kenya, Peru, and others.

Additionally, here in California, we already facilitate elections in carceral settings. People in jails have the right to vote, and some jails already serve as polling places for the people who are inside each election – including in Los Angeles County.

In 2020, over 5.1 million citizens in the United States were prohibited from voting because of their contact with the criminal legal system. This included over 50,000 Black people and over 77,000 Latinx people in California alone. The rates of these legal barriers to civic participation and social engagement are shocking: Black men are disenfranchised at a rate 10 times that of white men; Black women at a rate 5 times greater; Latino and Native American men at a rate double that of white men.

This disenfranchisement also disproportionately impacts our veterans, many of whom return to civilian life with visible and invisible trauma and face a likelihood of becoming unhoused and arrested that is significantly higher than the general public. California currently has nearly 7,000 veterans who are denied their voting rights because they are incarcerated.

Preserving the right to vote for all people, including those who are currently incarcerated, will have significant and positive impacts on community safety. The vast majority of people incarcerated in state prison – upward of 95% – will eventually return home. Data shows that people who vote while incarcerated and shortly thereafter are 50% less likely to ever be arrested.

California voters should have the opportunity to decide if our Democracy is one that thrives with the participation of everyone. ACA 4 will give the people of California a choice – should we be an inclusive, democratic society, or should we turn back to our own dark history of racially motivated disenfranchisement, voter suppression, and restriction of civil rights and participation.

We strongly support this important Assembly Constitutional Amendment 4 and its companion bill AB 1595 (Bryan) and urge your aye vote.

Sincerely,

Carmen-Nicole Cox
Director of Government Affairs
ACLU California Action

Sam Lewis
Executive Director
Anti-Recidivism Coalition

Kristin Nimmers
Policy & Campaign Manager
California Black Power Network

Thanh Tran
Policy Associate
Ella Baker Center

Taina Vargas
Executive Director
Initiate Justice Action

Antionette Ratcliffe
Executive Director
Initiate Justice

Rabbi Joel Simonds
Executive Director
Jewish Center for Justice

Dora Rose
Deputy Director
League of Women Voters of California

Khalid Alexander
Founder, President
Pillars of the Community

From: [Noreen Buller](#)
To: [Comment](#)
Subject: Inmates voting
Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 2:52:54 PM

*** EXTERNAL MESSAGE ***

I am totally not in support of this . Noreen buller
Pinole
Sent from my iPhone