



August 28, 2024

VIA Email to the Office of the Governor and Author

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1186 (Bonta) – Juveniles: Restitution Fines – REQUEST FOR GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

The League of Women Voters of California writes to request your signature on AB 1186 (Bonta), which will eliminate restitution fines for juveniles and make the outstanding balance of any restitution fines, including any collection fees, unenforceable and uncollectible 10 years after the fine was imposed. This change to the restitution fine system is designed to release people from never-ending indebtedness and its crippling financial, familial, and personal consequences.

The League of Women Voters of California believes that the criminal legal system should function in a way that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and fosters public trust. We further believe in rehabilitative approaches and preparing juveniles for productive participation in society.

Because of overpolicing and targeted policing of communities of color, and the consequences of racially-biased sentencing, the imposition of monetary victim restitution by Juvenile Courts falls disproportionately on Black, Latine, Indigenous, and other youths of color. Furthermore, youths are, by definition, indigent. Yet, youths face a rigid and unforgiving set of restitution laws, including severe consequences for nonpayment. The result can be a lifetime of financial instability.

At the same time that it causes serious problems for youths, their families, and communities, monetary restitution fails to deliver on its promise to victims. Because the burden of compensation rests on impoverished youths, victims often do not receive meaningful, timely, or complete restoration.

For these reasons, The League of Women Voters of California supports AB 1186 (Bonta) as it allows persons formerly convicted of juvenile offenses greater opportunities to develop productive adult lives. We respectfully request your signature. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Doute
Executive Director