

The Community Reinvestment Fund Must Prioritize Education and Youth Development in Communities that Need It Most

PROBLEM:

As the City of Los Angeles begins building an equitable regulatory system to address the impacts of prior cannabis policy, children and youth are too often overlooked despite having borne deep and negative impacts when parents, families, and community members have previously been incarcerated in large numbers.

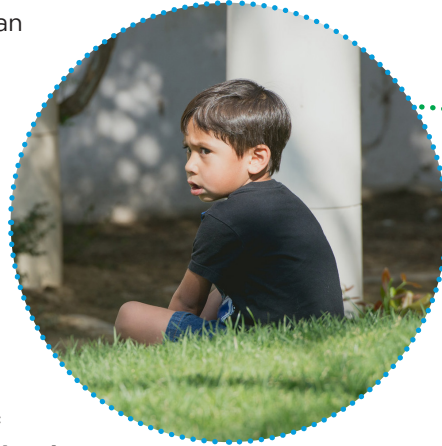
- The California State Library's Research Bureau estimated that 856,000 children and youth in California had a parent involved in California's criminal justice system—nearly 9% of the state's children.
- Nationwide, approximately one quarter of children with incarcerated parents are **under the age of five years old**.
- Incarceration of a parents disproportionately falls upon low income children of color: 1 in 9 Black children has an incarcerated parent and 1 in 28 Latino children has an incarcerated parent.
- A significant number of children and youth are unwilling witnesses to their parents' arrest and trials. A study of jailed mothers found that 20% of their children witnessed their mothers' arrests; **more than half of those children were between the ages of three to six years old**.

The effects of parental arrest and incarceration on a child's development can be profound and lasting. Many children have experienced the trauma of sudden separation from their sole caregiver. This loss can leave children with long lasting effects that range from feelings of anxiety and depression to aggression and drug use. Truancy and declination in school performance can also be consequences.

As compared to children whose parents have not been incarcerated, children whose parents have been incarcerated are:

- **7 times** more likely to live with someone with a substance abuse problem
- **6 times** more likely to have witnessed domestic violence at home
- **3 times** more likely to have been a victim of or witness to neighborhood violence
- **3 times** more likely to have lived with a mentally ill or suicidal person
- **5 times** more likely than their peers to end up in prison themselves

Despite these incredibly challenging life circumstances, social equity and investment in these children and youth have not been at the forefront of conversations on cannabis policy.



SOLUTION:

The City of LA should use the Community Reinvestment Fund to rebuild children's lives, strengthen former inmates' families, bolster parental employment capacity, and invest in the neighborhoods that experienced the greatest impacts of prior cannabis enforcement. Given the impact of parental incarceration on children and youth, we believe the City should prioritize investment in the communities most profoundly affected by prior incarceration. In particular, the 20% revenue set aside for the Community Reinvestment Fund should:

1. Ensure that any funds spent on youth development target children from 0-18 years of age, not just older children and
2. Should be targeted for education and youth development

By incorporating a strong focus on education and youth development that explicitly targets children and youth from the ages 0-18, the City of LA can ensure that funding is being allocated to ensure that its most impacted children also are receiving adequate support in the communities most affected by prior cannabis policy.


first 5 la
Giving kids the best start

AMENDING MOTION

I MOVE that the Item # ___ on the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee relative to establishing a regulatory framework for commercial cannabis activity and other cannabis related issues, in the City of Los Angeles, (Council File #17-0653, 14-0366-S15) BE AMENDED to adopt the following recommendations:

1. REQUEST that the City Attorney, in consultation with the Chief Legislative Analyst and the Department of Cannabis Regulation, add language within the draft ordinance to establish that youth development and education are the top priorities for the Community Reinvestment Fund investments in neighborhoods most impacted by prior cannabis regulations.

2. REQUEST that the City Attorney add language to define youth development and education as inclusive of programs and supports for children and youth from 0 to 18 years old.

PRESENTED BY: _____

SECONDED BY: _____