

# Rental Assistance Delay: 3.5M at Risk of Eviction

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Thursday, September 23, 2021

## Precinct Reporter

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The Community's Newspaper - Serving Riverside County, Eastern Los Angeles County & San Bernardino County

Vol. 56 - No 57

"I wholly disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" - Voltaire



### Bill Capping Use of Tear Gas Awaits Signature

By Antonio Ray Harvey  
California Black Media

A police reform bill calling for stricter standards on how law enforcement officers across the state use rubber bullets and tear gas for crowd control has been approved by both the California Senate and Assembly.

The legislation, Assembly Bill (AB) 48 introduced by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), is awaiting Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature. He has until Oct. 10 to sign or veto it.

"During the nationwide protests in 2020, many reports showed peaceful protesters and bystanders being seriously injured, even permanently maimed, by dangerous projectiles," said Gonzalez, who represents California's 80th Assembly District located in southern San Diego County.

"This bill will protect Californians' right to safely protest by establishing statewide standards that help minimize the overuse of these dangerous weapons, while directing law enforcement on how and when they can deploy projectiles in truly life-threatening situations," she continued.

AB 48 prohibits the use

of kinetic impact projectiles - i.e., rubber bullets and plastic bullets - as well as chemical agents like tear gas by any law enforcement officer or agency "to disperse any assembly, protest, or demonstration." It also prohibits their use solely "due to a violation of an imposed curfew, verbal threat, or non-compliance with a law enforcement directive."

In addition, AB 48 requires officers to be trained on the safe use of kinetic projectiles and chemical agents for situations where any person's life is threatened or instances where a person faces serious risk of injury.

In these situations, according to the bill, officers would be required to employ other de-escalation techniques before using projectile weapons. Also, the officer must provide prompt medical assistance to any person injured. The bill prohibits aiming these weapons at the head, neck, or other vital organs.

Across the country, on average, officers receive about 50 hours of firearm training during the police academy. They receive less than 10 hours of de-escalation training, the Brookings Institution reported in April 2021.

The California Peace

Officers' Association (CPOA), which represents over 16,000 members employed by municipal, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, has publicly registered disagreement with parts of AB 48.

"This bill is a near-exact replica of last year's failed AB 66, which CPOA opposed," said Shaun Rundle, CPOA Deputy Director.

AB 66 was also authored by Gonzalez. CPOA is in favor of limiting the use of less-lethal force but has safety concerns about officers being struck by - or targeted with - life-threatening items such as frozen water bottles, bricks, and laser pointers.

"Restricting the use of less-lethal options limits the tools that are at an officer's disposal to protect public safety," the California State Sheriffs' Association said in a statement opposing AB 48.

"However, by restricting when an officer may use those tools, their response to a particular situation may end up being guided by choices about practices that may be acceptable or unacceptable to some instead of what measure is most appropriate in the context of the event," the statement continued.

Last year, Sen. Steven Bradford (D-Gardena), chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, introduced another police reform bill, Senate Bill (SB) 731. Although that bill did not make it to the Senate floor for a full vote, SB 731, which proposed a statewide process to disqualify bad officers and block them from being hired by other agencies, resurfaced as SB 2 last December. The updated version of the legislation passed in the Senate with a 28-9 vote last week. It has been sent to Governor's desk for signature or veto.

According to the State Sheriffs' Association, SB2 could be an obstacle in hiring, recruiting, and maintaining employees.

Bradford, on the other hand, says the legislation is timely and necessary.

"We want to be intentional about what we are doing here in California when it comes to police reform," Bradford told the Senate Judiciary Committee about SB 2 last April. That's what this bill does. It's intentional by what we are trying to achieve. This is a fair measure and far better than any that exist today. This is a fair measure and far better than any that exist today."

### Orgs Urge Community To Vaccinate

By Dianne Anderson

Flu season isn't technically here yet, but already COVID-19 Delta cases top the charts at nearly three times as bad as this time last year.

Facts are facts, and data from the latest surge of the highly contagious variant is hard to ignore, even as die-hard anti-vaxxers are filling up hospitals nationwide. In some states, hospitals are rationing ICU cases, and the National Guard is called in to help with overflow.

That worries Corey Jackson, who said the evidence is clear that the unvaccinated are the ones who are sick and dying. Through his outreach, he wants the community to understand the vaccine benefits before the numbers surge this winter.

"Less than one percent of the population might have an adverse, typically a minimal negative effect," he said. "For African Americans as a whole, we're more likely to die from what we eat every day, the fried foods, salt and sugar, than this vaccine."

Jackson is one of several partners with Reach Out West End, a nonprofit effort partially funded by Riverside County Public Health Department to help keep community organizations mobilized with resources and vaccination data for the community.

Jackson, CEO of SBX Youth and Family Services, is a long-time community activist, and has partnered with county networks for months to increase vaccinations, and access to centers and sites. He continues targeted outreach, and is urging the community to get the shot.

"There's a number of pop-up vaccinations in

conjunction with school districts and churches, and we have to do the good old fashion building relationships and educating people," said Jackson, who is also a member of Riverside County Board of Education.

At this point, he doesn't think the public is paying attention to how bad the virus has become, or community infection spreading among children in the schools. He said that if the state were using the prior warning color scheme, the area would be purple.

"When we were shut down last time, this is worse because we're dealing with a different virus than before. This Delta is kicking our butts, but there is a worse one on the way," he said.

Like all viruses, COVID is doing what it can to survive. If people had gotten vaccinated early and wore a mask, he said the Delta variant may not be the problem that it is today.

If you say you're about the culture [and] about your people, the best thing you can do for your people right now is get the vaccination. You're passing it on to the people you profess to love and fight for," he said.

The data is barreling. Last week, the Center for Disease Control released its findings that unvaccinated people are 11 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than those who have received the vaccine.

Pepi Jackson, no relation, sees the issue as a personal choice - get deathly ill, or get the vaccine.

"It's just astounding. What logic are we using here? What's the critical thinking process?" said Jackson.

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### Free Money for Fast and Focused Students

By Dianne Anderson

Wherever tens of thousands of dollars of free money are up for grabs, smart students are thinking way ahead of the curve.

Now is the time to go for it. Dr. Loretta Jordan is not surprised at the major chasm between students of color and access to those FAFSA dollars, but she said there are several ways to close the gap toward educational pathways.

Yet \$3.4 billion financial aid is left on the table each year, mostly by low-income first-generation students of color, according to a recent study by the Education Strategy Group.

The study finds that students of color are

significantly less likely to complete the FAFSA, with 34 percent of Hispanic students and 26 percent of African-American students have not completed the FAFSA, compared to just 18 percent of white students.

Dr. Loretta Jordan is not surprised at the major chasm between students of color and access to those FAFSA dollars, but she said there are several ways to close the gap toward educational pathways.

First and foremost is meeting the deadline. "FAFSA is based on income, but the lack of knowledge of how to complete the FAFSA and meet the deadline is the biggest villain to these populations," she

said. Most Black and Brown students qualify for FAFSA. Colleges and universities vary on their individual deadlines for admission, but she said all students should check out www.studentaid.gov website to get full access to numerous resources and deadlines.

Students should recommend filing FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1 for the 2022 school year.

"From what I'm hearing, the financial burden is one of the [main] barriers for people of color and underrepresented populations to gain access to higher education," said Jordan, associate dean of Student Development at Rancho Santiago Community

College District. Other barriers, especially first-generation students typically don't have anyone in their social or family circles who have been through the process to show them the way to higher education pathways.

But she feels most important thing for all students to know is to be tenacious and power forward on their goals.

"Stay the course because this is the entryway so students won't have to be stressed by their financials and their need to maintain their enrollment. All they need to focus on is their coursework," she said.

At Long Beach City College, Dr. Nobel Corral is smoothing the way for high school seniors and transfer students.

He said the campus matriculation office, the first-

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