

# **Editorial: With Prop. 47, cities and counties have savings to count, decisions to make**

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Just over 100 days have passed since California voters adopted Proposition 47, which reduced six specific felonies to misdemeanors; and it will be nine more months before the state quantifies and distributes the first year's worth of savings it will accumulate by no longer imprisoning so many felons. So, of course, it's far too early to assess what the initiative has accomplished and what problems, if any, have emerged.

Still, there is enough early information to allow the state Legislative Analyst's Office to note, as it did Tuesday, that in addition to those expected state savings, California's 58 counties are already being relieved of spending "several hundred million dollars annually" that they formerly had to allocate for prosecuting, locking up and supervising suspected and convicted felons locally. Proposition 47 backers focused their campaign on the state savings; the local windfall that is currently materializing is a bonus.

So local governments already have spending decisions to make. They can still arrest and jail people for the former felonies. They can also seek effective alternatives to incarceration.

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