

# Felons may be able to vote while in Calif. prison

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

Thousands of felons serving time in county jails would be allowed to vote in California elections from behind bars under a bill moving swiftly through the state Legislature despite widespread opposition from law enforcement officials.

Assemblywoman Shirley Weber, D-San Diego, introduced the measure with an aim that providing convicts the right to vote will give them a better sense of belonging to society and possibly reduce their chances of committing new crimes when released.

But police chiefs and sheriffs throughout California say the proposal that passed narrowly in the state Assembly undermines a longstanding social compact: those who commit a serious crime lose not only their freedom to live in society for a time but also their right to participate in democracy.

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