

The ACLU report on the charging practices of Riverside County is as disingenuous as it is inaccurate. Most notable are the ACLU's purported recommendations to implement programs that we previously initiated, as well as their false apples-to-oranges comparisons between the overall percentage of minority population countywide to the percentage of minorities against whom criminal charges are subsequently filed in Riverside County. A fair and accurate comparison would instead look at the percentage of cases filed against minorities versus their white counterparts across similar types of crimes within Riverside County. Meaning, we should look at the pool of individuals who have cases submitted to the District Attorney's Office for review by our local police agencies, and then determine if we are filing those types of cases at the same rate regardless of race. Additionally, it is easy to falsely attribute differences in charging practices to race instead of other obvious contributing factors present in the offense itself or the prior criminal history of the individual. To do otherwise is a dishonest exercise set up to ensure inaccurate statistics in support of a preconceived narrative.

In 2020, the Riverside County District Attorney took several steps to ensure our filing practices are fair and appropriately hold accountable all those involved in the criminal justice system, regardless of race. In January of 2020, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office went to blind-charging to ensure that the prosecutors who file criminal cases do not review racially identifying information about the suspects named in submitted police reports by law enforcement, before deciding whether or not to move forward with prosecution. Additionally, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office engaged an independent third-party organization to conduct a full data audit of our case management system. This extensive review will fill in all of our missing data and look at our filing and case outcomes from 2004 to present. Early reports, focused on how we have approached and filed felony cases, reveal that we are indeed filing at a standard and equal rate between White, Black, and Hispanic suspects. Of course, this is when compared to the pool of justice-involved individuals that we are asked to review for potential criminal prosecution, and not to the overall statewide minority population, which obviously includes those outside of the criminal justice system. By contrast, the faulty ACLU comparison offensively insinuates that the state's minority population at large is far more justice-involved than accurate statistical reporting would support.

This office has further taken steps to ensure that our office looks at the totality of the circumstances of a criminal offense, by ensuring that we have just filing practices when we charge crimes, while also ensuring that we treat minority victims equally throughout Riverside County. What is often conveniently left out of the nationwide assault on the integrity of prosecutors, is the fact that we prosecute crimes that come from communities and communities represent all individuals in the criminal justice system on both sides of a case, the victim as well as the defendant. To place an arbitrary quota on the filing of cases based on the race or ethnicity of a defendant would mean that we would be telling victims of crime from those same communities that they do not matter, and their cases will not see justice. The ACLU has once again missed that victims of crime, are also part of the equation.

Violent crime is on the rise in Southern California. The practices of the Riverside County District Attorney focusing on rehabilitation through our collaborative courts for low level crimes, and a focus on tough prosecution of our more serious violent offenses, make Riverside County among the safest county in Southern California despite recent rises in violent crime. We also review prior convictions through our state funded prosecutor initiated resentencing program and our conviction review committee, which was established by DA Hestrin in 2016. While these tools alternative sentencing tools are effective when used sparingly and appropriately by prosecutors on a case-by-case basis, the ACLU's suggestion that these alternatives be deployed for large scale reforms is unfounded. Contrary to the

assertions of the ACLU, there is absolutely no systematic agency wide causal studies that support these alternative practices on a large scale.

We have also addressed the rise in juvenile crime by focusing on crime prevention strategies through our nationally recognized crime prevention unit (CPU). The goal of the CPU is to help young people stay in school, achieve academic success, and develop positive life skills. CPU has developed programs and strategies designed to suppress crime, prevent victimization, and address the disparate needs of at-risk youth and their families. We provide youth empowerment and anti-victimization education in addition to in-depth case management, stability, and response services for at-risk youth and their families throughout Riverside County. CPU has several active programs that we use to achieve these goals including our School Attendance Review Boards (SARB), Youth Empowerment and Safety Presentations (YES), Gang Awareness, Mentorship, and Education presentations (GAME), and De-Escalation, Assistance, and Resource Team (DART).

This Office cares deeply about its mission to serve the citizens of Riverside County regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and gender. We are confident that an unbiased analysis will demonstrate that the innovative approach to prosecution taken by this office meets our unwavering goal of fair justice in all criminal cases throughout Riverside County.