Inventory of the California State Assembly Public Safety Committee Records

Processed by Archives Staff and Melodi Andersen
California State Archives
1020 "O" Street
Sacramento, California 95814
Phone: (916) 653-2246
Fax: (916) 653-7363
Email: ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov
URL: http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/
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Inventory of the California State Assembly Public Safety Committee Records

Collection numbers: See series descriptions for LP numbers

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Jason Sarmiento
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Encoded by:
Veronica Lara
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Descriptive Summary
Title: California State Assembly Public Safety Committee Records
Dates: 1959-2010
Collection number: See series descriptions for LP numbers.
Creator: Assembly Public Safety Committee
Collection Size: 193 cubic feet, including audiocassettes, audio disc (CD), dictabelts, videocassettes, and videodiscs (DVD)
Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California
Abstract: The Assembly Public Safety Committee Records span from 1959 to 2010, consisting of 192 cubic feet of records (including audiovisual materials) reflecting the activity of the committee in overseeing legislation and other matters affecting California's criminal justice, correctional needs, and public safety. The records were created by four different records creators: (1) Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee, 1959-1970; (2) Assembly Criminal Justice Committee, 1971-1982; (3) Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee, 1983-1984; (4) and Assembly Public Safety Committee, 1985-2010.
Physical location: California State Archives
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Assembly Public Safety Committee records, LP[number];[folder number], California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.
Acquisition and Custodial History
The State Archives received these records in accordance with California Government Code 9080(b) which requires legislative committees to transfer their records to the State Archives when they are no longer needed by the committee.
Committee History
The Assembly Public Safety Committee is the most recent assembly committee to oversee the California Penal Code. The committee was originally a part of the Assembly Judiciary Committee, which began with the first legislative session in 1849. The original Judiciary Committee dealt with a broad legislative scope regarding both penal and civil matters. The division between the Assembly Judiciary Committee and the committee that would become the Assembly Public Safety Committee
occurred in 1959, as a method to alleviate the workload of the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Committee members endured lengthy bi-weekly hearing sessions, ranging from 8 p.m. to midnight. During these strenuous meetings, committee members heard and deliberated thousands of bills a week. At the suggestion of Assemblyman John O’Connell, the Assembly Judiciary Committee was divided into two scopes: Civil Codes and Penal Codes. In accordance with House Resolution 24 of 1959, the Assembly Judiciary Committee was split into the Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee and the Assembly Judiciary-Civil Committee. As the scope of the new Judiciary Committee dealt with California’s Civil Code, the Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee oversaw bills relating to the Penal Code, sanctions and criminal offenses. Furthermore, the resolution established the committee both as a standing committee and an interim committee.

During the 1971 session, the name of the standing committee was changed to the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee. The committee maintained the same subject scope as its predecessor, administering bills relating to the Penal Code and constitutional rights. The committee focused on subjects involving the study of peace officers, juvenile court law, qualification of counsel in capital cases, inspection of stolen vehicles, grand juries, youth authority and prisons (construction and discipline), felony offenses and those misdemeanor violations not incidental to the subject matter of another committee. For most of the committee’s history, the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee was chaired by Democrats, including Alan Sieroty, Bill McVittie and Terry Goggin.

In 1983, House Resolution 8 renamed the committee the Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee, altering the committee’s scope to focus on matters regarding public safety. Examples of the committee’s public safety focus include subjects such as juvenile justice reform and school violence prevention. Committee members introduced a bi-partisan bill aimed to enforce appropriate punishment of juvenile offenders, increase public protection against juvenile crime and prevent juvenile crime by more effective methods of rehabilitation. On the subject of school violence, committee members proposed bills with the goal of protecting students and promoting a safe learning environment. Examples of school violence bills include increase penalties for campus crimes against students and faculty, along with penalties against campus trespassers.

In 1985, the committee was renamed as the Assembly Public Safety Committee at the behest of committee chairman Larry Stirling. Enforced by House Resolution 8, the committee maintained the scope of the Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety, merely changing the title to Public Safety to “focus more on its intended purposes”. Later, committee chairman Robert Hertzberg (D) authored various bills relating to anti-crime measures, such as the establishment of inter-agency gang intervention programs, enhanced sentencing for drug manufactures, and outlawing internet stalking and harassment.

The chairs of these committees from 1959 to 2010 were:

**Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee, 1959-1970**
O’Connell, John (Dem.), 1959-62
Winton, Gordon (Dem.), 1963
Young, Pearce (Dem.), 1964-1966
Biddle, W. Craig (Rep.), 1967-1968
Murphy, Frank (Rep.), 1969-1970

**Assembly Criminal Justice Committee, 1971-1982**
Beverly, Robert G. (Rep.), 1971-1972
Sieroty, Alan (Dem.), 1973-1976
Maddy, Kenneth L. (Rep.), 1977-1978
McVittie, Bill (Dem.), 1979-1980
Goggin, Terry (Dem.), 1981-1982

**Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee, 1983-1984**
Sher, Byron (Dem.), 1983-1984

**Assembly Public Safety Committee, 1985-2010**
Stirling, Larry (Rep.), 1985-1988
Epble, Bob (Dem.), 1993-1994
Boland, Paula (Rep.), 1995-1996
Hertzberg, Robert (Dem.), 1997-1998
Honda, Michael (Dem.), 1999-2000
Washington, Carl (Dem.), 2001-2002
Leno, Mark (Dem.), 2003-2006
Solorio, Jose (Dem.), 2007-2010

Scope and Content

Researchers interested in the history of the California Penal Code, public safety, criminal procedure and criminal justice will find the Assembly Public Safety Committee records useful. Legal researchers will find the Consultant Correspondence series helpful while researching the legality of various bills introduced by committee members. Researchers interested in prison reform and restructuring will find the Prison Files series helpful in their research. Furthermore, the records reveal how the scope and responsibilities of the committee changed and expanded each time it was renamed. The committee focused on subjects relating to criminal justice and procedural bill files with a minimum importance of anti-crime bills, as seen with committee hearings pertaining to the 1965 Watts Riots and riot responses and the Los Angeles County Justice System Subvention Program (AB90, 1979-1980). The committee’s greater emphasis on public safety matters begins during the 1983-1984 legislative session and the creation of the Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety. Public safety-related records include Hearing Files regarding the 1984 Victim’s Rights Bill (Proposition 8, 1984) and the 1984 Safe Schools Legislation Package (AB2480-AB2484, 1983-1984). Notable legislation passed by the Assembly Public Safety Committee includes Three Strikes Initiative (AB971/Proposition 184, 1994) and Matt’s Law/college hazing (SB1454, 2005-2006).

Accruals
Further accruals are expected.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog.

- Juvenile delinquency - California
- School violence - California - Prevention
- Prisons - Law and legislation - California

Related Material at the California State Archives
Assembly Judiciary Committee records
Senate Public Safety Committee records
Robert G. Beverly papers
Frank Murphy papers
Paula Boland papers
John L. Burton papers
Bob Epple papers
Michael Honda papers
Robert M. Hertzberg papers
Kenneth L. Maddy papers
William McVittie papers
Carl Washington papers

Oral Histories
John L. Burton, Oral History Interview, 1986-1987, Conducted by Julie Shearer, University of California, Berkeley, for the California State Archives State Government Oral History Program.


Inventory of the California State Assembly Public Safety Committee Records
See series descriptions for LP numbers.

**Microfilm**

Bill Files for the Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee from 1970; Assembly Criminal Justice Committee from 1971-1976; Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee from 1983-1984; and Assembly Public Safety Committee from 1985-1990 are available on microfilm at the California State Archives. Researchers are asked to use the microfilm copies when available.

**Note to Researchers**

Researchers interested in this committee are advised to check the papers of its Chairs. Committee Chairs often kept materials relating to committee operations among their personal files. For Chair papers available at the California State Archives or other repositories, this information can be found in the committee history.
Bill files from 1960 to 1968 and from the 1981-1982 were not transferred to the California State Archives. Bill files created by the Assembly Public Safety Committee and its predecessors may include bill analyses, amendments and resolutions, author’s statements, testimony, press releases, editorials and newspaper clippings, correspondence, committee statements, and other information.

Notable legislation considered by the Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee included AB1226 (Braithwaite, 1970), jail inmate services; AB112, (Z'berg, 1969), marijuana possession penalties; AB179 (Miller, 1969), probation reports; AB312 (Britschgi, 1969), assault on peace officers; and AB261 (Mulford, 1969), disorderly conduct at the State Capitol. Bills considered by the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee included AB2703 (Sieroty, 1971), terms of parole; AB1685 (Crown, 1972), criminal records dissemination; AB2268 (Crown, 1972), criminal offense records; and AB1343 (Elder, 1979-1980), reserve police officers. The focus on public safety legislation occurred under the Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee, and included bills such as AB2480 (Sher, 1983-1984), Safe School Program of 1984; AB2501 (Bronzen, 1983-1984), booby trap legality; AB3453 (Moore, 1983-1984), denial of bail of sex offenders; AB10 (Moorehead, 1983-1984), juvenile crimes with adult punishment; and AB33 (Bane, 1983-1984), poisoning of water and food supplies. The Assembly Public Safety Committee considered various legislations relating to public safety and the Penal Code, including AB1467 (1985-1986, Condit), death penalty; AB1330 (Gotch, 1993-1994), illegal firearms; AB2222 (2001-2002, Koretz), .50 caliber sniper rifle possession; and AB2715 (2009-2010, Bass), three strikes law.

Bill files from 1970-1976 and 1983-1990 are found on microfilm, with subsequent years to be added on an ongoing basis. Audio/videotapes have been removed to cold storage and separation sheets are included within the file folders to indicate this.

Assembly Criminal Procedures Committee, 1959-1970
1959 AB2016 (1v) LP157:218
1969 AB4-AB2337, ACA84 (4ff) LP163:114-118
1969 SB4-SB1367 (5ff) LP163:119-122
1970 AB20-AB2511, ACR55, AJR40, HR69 (6ff) MF LP163:123-128
1970 SB48-SB1416, SJR12 (3ff) MF LP163:129-131
Assembly Criminal Justice Committee, 1971-1980
1971 AB5-AB2753, ACA8-ACA29, ACR17-ACR158 MF LP163:132-144
1971 AJR4 (14ff) MF LP319:1
1971 SB4-SB1633, SCA42 (4ff) MF LP163:145-148
1972 AB5-AB2372, ACA23-ACA85, ACR36-ACR46, AJR39 (12ff) MF LP319:2-13
1972 SB1-SB1489, SCA10, SCR40, SCR53 (5ff) MF LP319:14-18
1975-1976 SB21-SB2177, SCR40, SJR24 (10ff) MF LP319:68-77
1977-1978 SB15-SB1808 (20ff) LP319:115-134

See Appendix A for LP numbers.

Series 2 Hearing Files 1959-1994

Physical Description: 190 file folders, 197 audiocassettes, and 16 dictabelts.

Arrangement
Hearing files are arranged chronologically by date of hearing.

Access Information
Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.

Scope and Content Note
Hearing files for the Assembly Public Safety Committee and its predecessor committees may contain agendas, audiocassettes, dictabelts, transcripts, testimony, background reports, and working files for regular session hearings, interim hearings, and some joint hearings. Audiocassettes and dictabelts included were moved to a cold-storage vault for preservation purposes and separation sheets are in the appropriate files to alert the researcher to the existence of such items. The State Archives has no equipment to listening to the dictabelts. Many of the cassette tapes are recorded at low volume making them hard to hear and understand.

Some notable hearing topics of the Assembly Criminal Procedure Committee (1959-1970) include capital punishment, parole and probation, the Humane Abortion Act, and the Los Angeles Watts Riot. Hearings held by the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee (1971-1982) included topics such as gang violence, inmate labor, child molestation, impaired driver sentencing, and the Los Angeles County Justice System Subvention Program. During the short lifespan of the Assembly Criminal Law and Public Safety Committee (1983-1984), the committee reviewed bills pertaining to public safety, including a safe school legislation package, victim’s rights, and crime surrounding liquor stores. In 1965, the Assembly Public Safety Committee continued to hear bills pertaining to the safety of the public and the California Penal Code, including child witnesses, sex offender registration, domestic violence, assault weapons, and the three strikes initiative.

For a list of hearing dates and topics, see Appendix A in Additional Series Information.

Additional Series Information
Appendix A: Hearing Files

See Appendix B for LP Numbers.

Series 3 Subject Files 1959-2010

Physical Description: 74 file folders

Arrangement
Subject files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Scope and Content Note
Subject files contain information on a variety of topics relevant to the committee. The subjects may include additional information on an existing bill or hearing file, material related to proposed legislation, or documents related to committee administration. Subject files contain studies, correspondence, press clippings, and reports on topics of interest to the committees. The files date from a variety of periods and were maintained by the committee over varying lengths of time and through committee name changes. Notable topics include the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP), grand jury reorganization, affirmative action and validation, victim’s rights bills, and superfund liability.

For a list of subject headings, see Appendix B in Additional Series Information.

Additional Series Information
Appendix B: Subject Files
Series 4 Correspondence Files 1979-1980, 1985-1990

Correspondence files are arranged chronologically by date of correspondence.

Scope and Content Note
Correspondence includes letters received and written by the chairs of the committee, its members, and its staff members. The correspondence documents the wide-ranging interests of the committee in matters concerning prisons, prisoners, adult and juvenile courts, crimes, and law enforcement.

Correspondence, 1979 LP319:333-335
Correspondence, 1980 LP319:336-338
Correspondence, 1985 LP319:2172
Correspondence, 1986 LP319:2173-2176
Review and Comment Correspondence, 1986-1988 LP319:2177-2179
Correspondence, 1987 LP319:2180-2190
Correspondence, 1988 LP319:2191-2196
Correspondence, 1989 LP319:2197-2200
Correspondence, 1990 LP319:2201-2203

Series 5 Committee Workload Reports 1968-1974

Workload reports give number of measures assigned to and heard by the committee each date of hearing as well as the number of dead and held measures.

Series 6 Committee Record of Bills 1972, 1985-1991

Record of bills gives bill number, author, subject, hearing dates and committee actions.

Series 7 Committee Agenda 1972, 1983-1990

Committee agendas list the bill number, author, action on bill and how committee members voted on the bill.
Series 8 Agendas and Roll Call Files 1977-1984

LP319:342-350

Physical Description: 26 file folders

Arrangement
Agendas and roll calls files are arranged chronologically by legislative session then numerically by bill number.

Scope and Content Note
Agendas and roll calls give bill number, author, action on bill, and how committee members voted on each bill. Only a portion of the bills heard by the committee is included in this series.

Series 9 Prison Files 1983-1986

LP319:2131-2150

Physical Description: 20 file folders

Arrangement
Prison Files are arranged alphabetically by prison facility or county.

Scope and Content Note
Prison files relate to various bills and reports pertaining the maintenance, improvement, and condition of various facilities in the California State Penitentiary system. Includes financial analysis, conference committee reports, hearing of bill files from other committees (i.e. Senate Judiciary Committee), and bill file analysis.

For list of prison facilities and prisons within counties, see Appendix C in Additional Series Information.

Additional Series Information
Appendix C: Prison Files

Series 10 Consultant Correspondence 1986-1991

LP319:2151-2171

Physical Description: 20 file folders

Arrangement
Consultant Correspondence is arranged alphabetically by consultant’s surname.

Scope and Content Note
The Consultant Correspondence files include correspondence to and from the Assembly Public Safety Committee and its various legal consultants. Matters discussed are generally focused on research inquiries by committee members in search of the legal definition and capabilities relating to various bills. Correspondence includes letters received and written by the chairs of the committee, its members, and its staff members. The correspondence documents the wide-ranging interests of the committee in matters concerning prisons, prisoners, adult and juvenile courts, crimes, and law enforcement.

Dee Dee D’Ammo, 1987-1988 (3ff) LP319:2151-2153
Susan Goodman, 1987-1988 (3ff) LP319:2154-2156
Melissa Nappan, 1987 (1ff) LP319:2157
Michael Pinkerton, 1989-1991 (6ff) LP319:2158-2163
Michael Pinkerton’s 3rd reading files, 1986-1991 (3ff) LP319:2164-2166

Series 11 Summary Files 1987-1992

LP319:2204-2242

Physical Description: 35 file folders

Arrangement
Summary files are arranged chronologically by legislative session then numerically by bill number.

Scope and Content Note
Summary files include the summation of daily hearings held by the committee regarding Assembly and Senate bills. The summaries include minutes, voting records, and committee reports.
LP319:2243-2252  

Series 12 **Author’s Amendment Files 1990-1992**

Physical Description: 10 file folders

Arrangement

Author’s amendment files are arranged chronologically by date of introduced amendment.

Scope and Content Note

Author’s amendments refer to various changes made by assembly members regarding various bills or amendments to the California Penal Code. Changes include bill revisions, correction of typos, and revisions on established amendments.