



Pamela Price

DA Candidate: Alameda County

Personal Information

Website: priceforda.com

Email: electpamelaprice@gmail.com

Phone: 510.681.2229

Social Media

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Mass Incarceration

1. Do you agree that prosecutors' practices have contributed significantly to mass incarceration? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Yes. The state of California has built 22 prisons and only one university in the last 30 years. The charging and sentencing decisions District Attorneys have made in the last 30 years have filled those prisons to the point of unconstitutional overcrowding, such that a federal court ordered Governor Brown to immediately institute policies to reduce incarceration in 2011. That is to say, along with racially biased policing, District Attorneys have been chiefly responsible for creating and increasing the system of mass incarceration through their outdated policies and practices. Since 2011, Californians have embarked on a justice reform era and passed legislations and ballot measures that would ensure public safety and reduce incarceration. Legislation like AB 109, and ballot measures such as propositions 47 (reduce some nonviolent offenses from felonies to misdemeanors) and 57 (eliminated prosecutorial discretion to charge youth as adults and parole reform) have passed through the legislature and ballot box. Unsurprisingly, these reforms have been almost categorically opposed by District Attorneys throughout California despite their popular support by voters. I am running for District Attorney because the status quo is unacceptable. In the last 50 years, the Alameda County DA seat has not been challenged by anybody. It has simply been passed down from one regressive DA to another. I am running in order to end mass incarceration, eliminate racial disparities and hold law enforcement officers accountable. I am running for office in order to give people a second chance at a first class life.

2. Will you commit to implementing practices that will reduce the jail population and reduce state prison commitments by a specific percentage by the end of your first term? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide explanation. If "Yes", please identify your goal and what specific combination of reforms you anticipate will achieve this goal.

Yes

Here's Why

Currently over 75% of the people in Alameda County jails have not been convicted of a crime. I will strive to reduce the number of people who are in county jails who have not yet been convicted of a crime to only 10% of the jail population. With regard to prison commitments, I will convene a panel of experts and community leaders to study crime trends and advise me on how to reduce prison commitments while ensuring public safety. My aspirational goal would be to reduce prison commitments from Alameda County by 25% in the next four years. I will lobby both the state and the county to re-allocate the dollars saved from lower incarceration rates and invest them in re-entry services and stable housing, targeted employment opportunities for youth, and expanding community based housing for people living with mental health or substance use disorders within our county.

3. In the last ten years, the California District Attorneys Association has opposed all criminal justice reform measures at the ballot and most in the legislature. Will you commit to breaking with the CDAA and supporting reforms to reduce reliance on incarceration in the Legislature and the ballot box? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes**Here's Why**

I will immediately begin by supporting SB-10, the California Money Bail reform Act, which the California DA Association (CDAA) has opposed from the beginning. I will support criminal justice reform bills that reduce enhancements, eliminate prosecutorial immunity, and reform the police bill of rights to ensure better accountability for law enforcement officers. Additionally, I will support bills that reinvest funds into education and employment opportunities, affordable housing, free healthcare, and other social services that reduce and eliminate the conditions that produce crime in the first place. It is worth noting that my opponent, Nancy O'Malley is the current second vice-president of the CDAA association, and served as a treasurer of that association last year as well. While she has been in this leadership role within the CDAA, that association has almost categorically opposed all criminal justice reform legislation throughout the last few years. Her silence on those bills and lack of vocal support in opposition of the CDAA could only mean she was also against those criminal justice reform bills that aimed to reduce incarceration and ensure public safety, including propositions 47 and 57, which passed overwhelmingly in Alameda County.

Standing Up to Police Misconduct

1. Will you swiftly, thoroughly and transparently investigate officer-involved shootings and police brutality and make your findings publicly available? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Absolutely. I will create a “Police Accountability Unit” in my office that will vigorously and transparently investigate and prosecute all unlawful police misconduct. This unit will review all cases officer involved killings in the past 10 years to identify any cases where prosecution may be warranted. My opponent took a \$10,000 campaign contribution from the Fremont Police Officers Association while she was investigating them for the killing of a 16-year old pregnant teen of color and then cleared the Fremont Police of wrong doing. The East Bay Times newspaper has joined me in calling on her to return the contribution, which she has refused to do. Given the obvious unethical conflict of interest, I pledge to never take campaign contributions from police unions that are under investigation.

2. If you believe there is a conflict of interest in an investigation (as described above), will you recuse your office and call for an independent investigation by the Attorney General of California? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

I have long called for the Attorney General to take over all investigations and prosecutions of officer misconduct because too often, District Attorneys work so closely with police departments that it is too challenging to conduct an objective investigation and prosecution of police officers for unlawful conduct. I believe this refusal to acknowledge a conflict of interest has resulted in the lack of police accountability we have endured over the years.

3. As a critical police accountability tool, will you commit to keeping a thorough Brady database that includes all incidents of officer misconduct fully available to defense? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

If legally allowed, I'll make such a list publicly available. Past allegations of unlawful police misconduct include sex trafficking, sexual assaults, unconstitutional conduct, perjury, obstruction of justice, bribery, racially biased policing, and even killings of civilians by law enforcement officers. I will not tolerate unlawful conduct by police officers who abuse the power they are given by the public to protect and serve our communities.

4. Unlike most other states, California makes police misconduct records confidential by statute, preventing even prosecutors from looking into the files without first getting a court order. Do you think California should allow public access to records relating to police misconduct? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Police officers should not be afforded more due process protections than ordinary citizens. The special privileges and additional protections they have had has led to the disastrous and tragic situations where police officers are not held accountable for the crimes they commit. I will use my platform as a District Attorney to advocate for appropriate changes to the “Police Officer Bill of Rights” in order to allow for greater law enforcement accountability and eventually, community control of law enforcement. Additionally, I will support bills such as the one Assemblymember Dr. Shirley Weber has recently introduced to limit the use of deadly force by police in the wake of the killing of Stephon Clark by Sacramento police.

Combating Racial Disparities

1. Will you commit to implement policies and practices to combat bias in decision-making within your Office, including in charging decisions, bail recommendations, diversionary program placements, and plea bargains – as well as in internal Office practices (i.e. regularly bringing in experts to train staff and prosecutors on implicit and explicit bias, prioritizing inclusive hiring and promotion, and ensuring the office not only has racial and ethnic diversity, but also diversity in gender, ability, health)? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

The racial disparities in the Alameda County criminal justice system are outrageous. Studies have shown that while Black people are less than 13% of the County, we make up 64% of the jail population, are 20 times more likely to be incarcerated than our white counterparts, and make up 50% of the adults on probation. Additionally, according to a recent Stanford University study on diversity among DAs offices, over 60% of all line level and supervisory prosecutors in the Alameda County's DA's office are White with severe underrepresentation of Latinx attorneys within the office. I commit to the following actions in order to address racial disparities: All the ADAs will receive continual training on systemic racism and implicit bias as part of their professional development. I'll implement fair and just charging policies that are designed to reduce incarceration. We'll institute inclusive recruitment and promotion policies in order to have a DAs office that reflects the full diversity of our county. I will actively seek to expand alternatives to incarceration through homeless courts, veterans courts, neighborhood courts and mental health services to address the over-criminalization of poverty which has a hugely disparate impact on Black and Latinx residents.

2. Will you pledge to collect and post online quarterly statistical information disaggregated by race and gender on felony and misdemeanor charging decisions, convictions, declinations (to charge), and diversion program placements? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

I commit to examining all the current data and identify data gaps that can reveal to us where exactly the racial disparities are originating and how they can be stopped. I will work with experts like the Vera Institute who have done this type of assessment with DAs in other counties throughout the nation. I intend to publish both the raw data and our analysis of it on the DA's official website quarterly, along with a progress report of reduction in biased prosecution.

3. Will you decline to file charges where an arrest evidence that the officer engaged in racial profiling or other racial bias? Please answer “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Yes. I will go a step further and initiate and pursue a review of all cases charged in the past 7 years to identify any prosecutions by my office where racially-biased policing or decision-making impacted the disposition of the case and seek to provide appropriate remedies to ameliorate the harm caused.

Reducing Gun Violence

1. Do you pledge to be a champion and supporter of gun violence reduction strategies proven to reduce shootings, rather than over-relying on prosecution that is both generally ineffective at preventing future violence and is likely to send disproportionately more black and brown young people to jail? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Gun violence in our schools, homes and on the street, is a serious issue in Alameda County. In Alameda County, gun violence affects families and survivors in profound and long-lasting ways. I understand that this is not a problem that can be addressed by incarceration alone. I will work tirelessly to make sure schools and community-based organizations have the resources they need to help ensure that every young person has access to mental health services, a quality education and employment opportunities. I will work with law enforcement, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and the faith community to identify the root causes of gun violence, funnel resources toward addressing those issues, and build safer, healthier communities for everyone. I support increased gun violence reduction strategies as a means of addressing the shocking rate of gun-related deaths in our country.

Ending Poverty Penalties and Money Bail

1. Do you commit to ending the use of money bail in this County? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

I am strongly in favor of eliminating money bail. Money bail creates a tiered justice system, one for poor people and one for rich people. It criminalizes poverty by keeping people locked up not because they have been guilty of any crimes or are a threat to

public safety, but simply because they don't have enough money to post their bail. Meanwhile, rich people can simply post bail and leave custody even if they pose a threat to public safety. Money bail doesn't advance public safety and it perpetuates inequality. Furthermore, the racial disparities in who is currently incarcerated for inability to post bail are outrageous. People of color are disproportionately held in custody due to their inability to post bail, which forces people to plead guilty just to get out of jail. Money bail is also wasteful. Over the course of two years, experts estimate that Alameda County spent \$14.8 million dollars to incarcerate people who the prosecutor ultimately did not charge or whose charges were dismissed. These funds can be reallocated to prevent crime by supporting re-entry efforts, including job placement and housing assistance.

2. Do you support eliminating money bail in California at the state level? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

I have supported legislative efforts to reform money bail on the statewide level, including SB10 for many years, and will continue to do so as District Attorney. As District Attorney, I will significantly expand the pre-trial release program in the County with the presumption of release and release on recognizance for people, unless there is credible evidence that a person poses a serious flight risk or a threat to public safety. All my ADAs (Assistant District Attorneys) will be notified and expected to follow this policy. If an ADA believes a person is a flight risk or a threat to public safety and wants to keep them in jail until their day in court, they will have to seek approval from a team of supervisors and present credible evidence for their assessment. If we determine that a person must be incarcerated prior to conviction for any reason, we will also initiate and cooperate in efforts to expedite the resolution of the case.

3. Will you commit to develop and implement a plan to personally, regularly and meaningfully engage and communicate with all constituencies in your county, especially communities of color, the immigrant community, community-based organizations and criminal justice reform advocates, and to involve them in determining the priorities of your office within the first 100 days of your term? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

When I have the honor of being elected as Alameda first Black woman District Attorney, I will continue to engage with social justice and faith-based organizations in Alameda County, including but not limited to the community of Black churches, within my first 100 days and gather input from the community on the most pressing issues I should start to address. Furthermore, I will commit to attending or hosting townhalls quarterly and gather vital community input about the various efforts my office will put in place to end mass incarceration, eliminate racial disparities, and hold law enforcement officers accountable.

Ensuring Accessibility Transparency & Accountability

1. Will you pledge to publish on the Office website all policies, protocols, and MOUs regarding prosecution guidelines, police-involved incidents, bail recommendations, fines and fees, diversion programs, plea bargains, civil asset forfeiture, immigration considerations, and indigency determinations? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Transparency is a cornerstone of my campaign. I will publish all my policies and procedures online so that the community can hold me accountable if and when my office is conducting itself in a manner inconsistent with those policies. I find it unacceptable that such documents are not publicly available in almost all DA's websites.

Protecting Workers and Consumers

1. Will you pledge to create/expand a Conviction Integrity Unit and, as part of that process, compare current operations against the guidelines published by the Innocence Project in October 2015? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Everyone agrees that our criminal justice system is not perfect. Too often, innocent people are convicted of crimes they did not commit. Sadly, many prosecutors have been resistant to obtain or disclose information that might suggest that a defendant is actually innocent. I will instruct my deputies to focus more on justice than conviction rates and empower them to dismiss cases where the defendant may be innocent without hesitation. I will create a “Conviction Integrity Unit” to vigorously and promptly review closed cases and help ensure that innocent people are set free, no matter how much time has passed. I will strive to create a culture where all prosecutors respect and respond to the presumption of innocence.

Protecting Immigrant Communities

1. Will you pledge to adopt a written policy and training which encourages prosecutors to consider the unintended immigration-related consequences of prosecutorial decisions at all stages of a case and to use their discretion to reach immigration-safe dispositions for noncitizens whenever it is possible and appropriate? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Immigrants represent over 30% of Alameda County's population. Today, it is more important than ever to protect immigrant and non-citizen community members from the Trump Administration's plans for mass deportation. I will work with the immigration

specialists in the Public Defender's office to ensure that we achieve public safety by keeping families together and reaching immigration safe dispositions whenever possible.

2. To protect immigrant crime victims, will you pledge to adopt and promote a written U Visa policy within your Office that includes a rebuttable presumption of helpfulness and the direction that U Visa certifications be completed regardless of whether charges were brought, a conviction was achieved, or the case has concluded? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

Absolutely. The mission of my office will be to seek justice for all, and especially for vulnerable members of our community. I will strive to serve immigrant crime victims by ensuring they receive all necessary and appropriate services, including speedy U Visa certifications.

3. Will you refuse to cooperate and liaise with ICE? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

I will discourage cooperation between local law enforcement authorities and federal immigration enforcement agents and will not allow Alameda County's criminal justice system to become a tool of the Trump Administration's racist and xenophobic immigration policies.

Advancing Youth Justice

1. Will you commit to keeping all children out of adult court by pledging not to prosecute any minors as adults and by expanding the use of informal diversion and pre-filing diversion in juvenile cases? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

A recent study by the Center On Juvenile and Criminal Justice, the Burns Institute, and the National Center for Youth Law found that between 2010-2016 in Alameda County, Black youth were 65 times more likely and Latino youth were 27 times more likely to be prosecuted as adults than White youth. Only systemic racism in the current DA's decision-making process can explain those disturbing disparities. To eliminate this disparity in its totality, I pledge not to prosecute any youth under the age of 18 as an adult. Furthermore, I will implement policies to break the school to prison pipeline by significantly expanding restorative justice and other appropriate interventions. I will divert all youth facing misdemeanor charges into community based alternatives that can address their unmet social and emotional needs that are at the root of their behaviors through mentorship, and other positive youth development models. Lastly, I will look to implement a young adult court, similar to the one San Francisco DA's officer has put into place, to help divert young people who are facing felony charges through intense case management, housing and employment assistance, and positive mentorship programs. As a former foster kid myself and a survivor of the juvenile justice system, I know that the resources used to criminalize, prosecute, and incarcerate young people will be better spent on educational and youth employment programs.

2. Recognizing that children and youth are categorically less culpable than adults, that they have less impulse control and that they possess profound capacity for transformation, will you decline to seek life without the possibility of parole for any person under 25 at the time of offense? Please select “Yes” or “No” and provide an explanation.

Yes

Here's Why

The science on adolescent brain development is clear. Young people do not reach full brain development and decision-making capacity until their mid-twenties. As a result, given young people's profound capacity for transformation and maturity, I pledge not to seek life without parole sentences for people under the age of 25 at the time of offense.

3. Will you create or expand a Consumer Protection Unit in the Office to address labor violations – whether related to occupational safety and health or violations of basic laws, regulations or policies related to wages, hours or conditions of employment?

Yes**Here's Why**

I will adequately resource a consumer and worker protection unit within the DAs office in order to prioritize crimes such as wage theft and health and safety violations.

Death Penalty

1. Will you pledge to exercising your discretion never seek the death penalty? Please select "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.

Yes**Here's Why**

The voters in Alameda county have voted twice (in 2012 and 2016) to abolish the death penalty. There have been too many instances where innocent people have been executed or sent to death row and later exonerated for us to risk making such an irreversible mistake. Furthermore, the racial disparities in death row inmates are stark and disturbing. I will respect the wishes of Alameda County voters and not seek the death penalty when I have the honor of being elected as your District Attorney.