

The increase in property crime as a result of Proposition 47.

California's Proposition 47 was approved in November of 2014. The proposition reduced the classification of most "non-serious and nonviolent property and drug crimes" from a felony to a misdemeanor. These crimes include personal use of illegal drugs, and most forms of stealing money or property less than \$950, to include: shoplifting, theft, receiving stolen property, forgery, fraud, and writing false checks (California).

While it is too early to examine the long term effects of Prop 47, we can certainly analyze the immediate effects. Unfortunately while the state of California does submit Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data, it fails to submit National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data. This limits our crime tracking due to the "Hierarchy Rule." While NIBRS collects all crime types, UCR only reports the most serious crime during an incident (Muenzer). The disparity in the reporting systems may be insignificant when it comes to violent crime, however, I would dare to guess that it in relation to non-violent crime reporting, it likely skews the numbers a significant amount. In my experience in patrol, it is not often that a non-violent offender only commits a single non-violent offense.

Since the focus of this paper is the effects of Prop 47, I will review data from 2010 forward, using the years prior to 2015 to identify the recent crime trend and compare it

to last years' crime statistics. Far too many factors affect the efficiency of policing. To compare the abilities, technologies, and legislative changes to anything greater than 10 years old would make it nearly impossible to identify the impact of any one change.

One violent crime category I am also interested in reviewing is robbery. Although listed as a violent crime, further review of these cases would likely determine that a brief and simple case of tug-of-war likely took place in a large number of these incidents. While it is a greater offense, it is still within the realm of stealing property from another, therefore, robbery will also be included in this review. A brief review of the data and graphs provide in this report, shows that property crimes were on the rise from 2010 to 2012, began to decline over the next two years, and began to increase again in 2015. Felony arrests remained relatively steady up until 2014, with a drop in 2015 and an increase in misdemeanor arrests. Finally, the most significant observable change is the complete inverse of felony versus misdemeanor drug related arrests. While this may show exactly what politicians would want to relay as a successful reflection of Prop 47, I would argue that the amount of misdemeanor drug arrests skyrocketed even exceeding the highest number of previous felonious arrests by nearly 24,000. Further research would need to be conducted to determine how many of these arrestees were repeat offenders, of which, I would consider this "reformatory solution" to drug abuse and drug related crime failure.

While the numbers may not express the true impact, many news reports have begun to investigate the effects that Prop 47 has brought upon local businesses and citizens.

CBS in the San Francisco Bay Area reported, "In Large retailers including Safeway, Target, Rite Aid and CVS pharmacies say shoplifting increased at least 15 percent, and

in some cases, doubled since voters approved Proposition 47 and ended the possibility of charging shoplifting as a felony with the potential for a prison sentence (Spike).”

Other analysts, such as Mike Males, Senior Research Fellow at the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice claimed, “The results suggest that at this time, the data does not show a correlation between Proposition 47 and the total 2015 crime increase.” (Crime, 2016). I would argue for these analysts to take a closer look at the relationship between the property crimes and also factor in repeat offenders. Stephen Franc reported on an analysis from LA County and commented that, “Of the nearly 4,500 people that L.A. County sheriff’s deputies arrested for Prop 47 crimes since the initiative’s implementation in November 2014, more than 460 have been arrested again – some on multiple occasions.

While more research needs to be conducted, it is evident that the negative effects of Prop. 47 are being felt throughout the state of California. Further evaluation of the problem and identifying correlations will be necessary in order to influence lawmakers into making appropriate adjustments and finding a balance between prison overcrowding and effective punishment for offenders committing crimes.

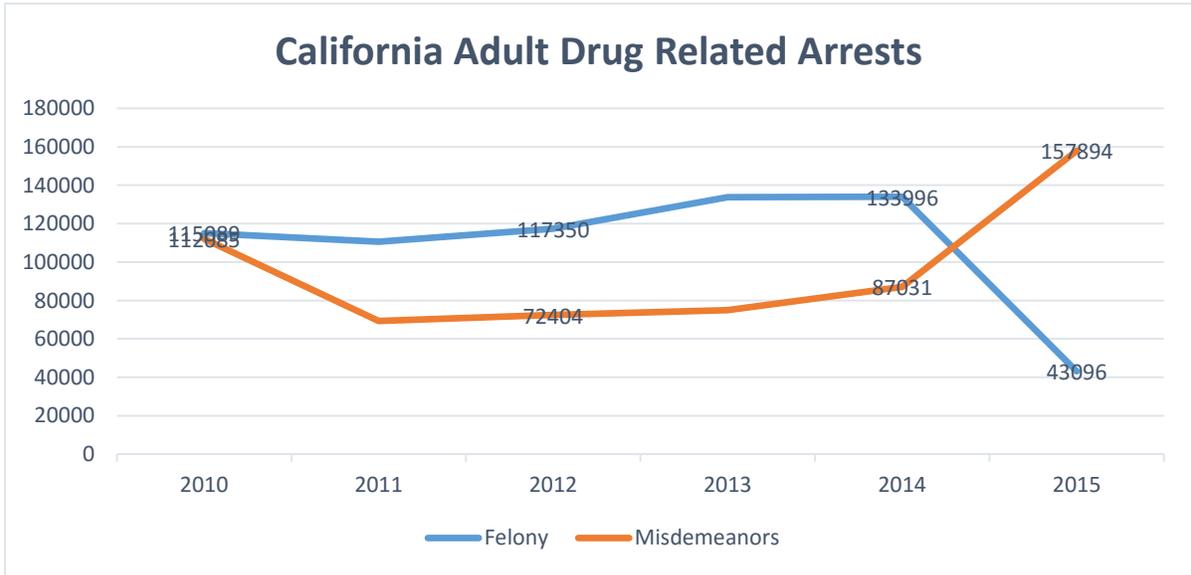
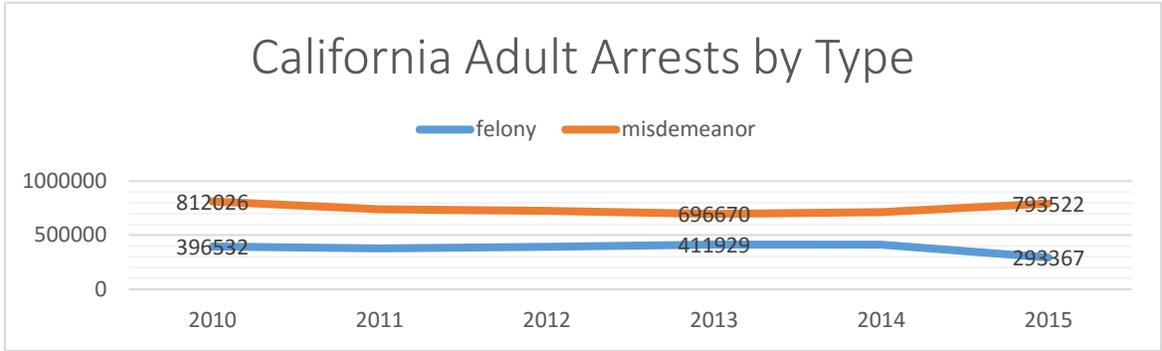
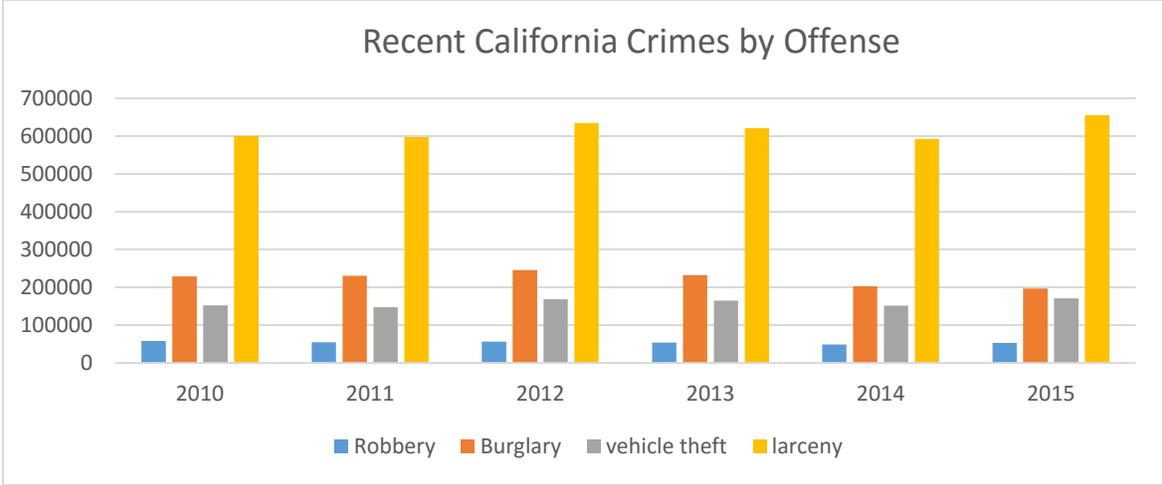


Table 1
CRIMES, 1966-2015
 Number and Rate per 100,000 Population

Year(s)	Violent crimes					Property crimes				Arson ²
	Total	Homicide	Rape ¹	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Total	Burglary	Motor vehicle theft	Total larceny-theft	
Number										
2015.....	166,588	1,861	12,793	52,785	99,149	1,023,828	197,189	170,788	655,851	7,380
2014.....	151,425	1,697	9,397	48,650	91,681	946,682	202,556	151,790	592,336	7,135
2013.....	151,634	1,745	7,459	53,621	88,809	1,018,333	231,909	165,217	621,207	7,446
2012.....	160,629	1,878	7,828	56,491	94,432	1,048,764	245,601	168,516	634,647	7,519
2011.....	155,313	1,794	7,678	54,358	91,483	974,666	230,334	147,030	597,302	7,164
2010.....	163,957	1,809	8,325	58,100	95,723	981,523	228,672	152,494	600,357	7,864

Table 16
TOTAL ARRESTS, 1966-2015
 Number and Rate per 100,000 Population at Risk

Year(s)	Total			Law violations									Status offenses ¹
				Total			Felony			Misdemeanor			
	Total	Adult	Juvenile	Total	Adult	Juvenile	Total	Adult	Juvenile	Total	Adult	Juvenile	Juvenile
Number													
2015.....	1,158,812	1,086,889	71,923	1,150,118	1,088,889	63,229	314,748	293,367	21,381	835,370	793,522	41,848	8,094
2014 ^a	1,212,845	1,126,022	86,823	1,201,964	1,126,022	75,942	439,958	412,307	27,651	762,006	713,715	48,291	10,881
2013.....	1,205,536	1,108,599	96,937	1,193,726	1,108,599	85,127	442,741	411,929	30,812	750,985	696,670	54,315	11,810
2012.....	1,238,496	1,117,776	120,720	1,222,104	1,117,776	104,328	429,807	393,439	36,368	792,297	724,337	67,960	16,392
2011.....	1,267,196	1,117,833	149,563	1,245,369	1,117,633	127,736	419,914	376,511	43,403	825,455	741,122	84,333	21,827
2010.....	1,394,425	1,208,558	185,867	1,366,831	1,208,558	158,273	448,552	396,532	52,020	918,279	812,026	106,253	27,594

Table 23
ADULT FELONY ARRESTS, 2010-2015
 By Category, Offense, and Law Enforcement Disposition

Category, offense, and law enforcement disposition	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ^a	2015		Percent change	
						Number	Percent	2010-2015	2014-2015
Total									
Total.....	396,532	376,511	393,439	411,929	412,307	293,367	100.0	-26.0	-28.8
Category and offense									
Violent offenses.....	102,937	98,660	97,732	94,820	99,767	102,415	34.9	-0.5	2.7
Homicide.....	1,457	1,438	1,541	1,318	1,332	1,351	0.5	-7.3	1.4
Rape ¹	1,766	1,585	1,529	1,484	2,169	2,217	0.8	25.5	2.2
Robbery.....	13,688	13,290	13,384	12,828	12,062	13,306	4.5	-2.8	10.3
Assault.....	84,585	80,879	79,853	77,794	82,885	84,019	28.6	-0.7	1.4
Kidnapping.....	1,441	1,468	1,425	1,396	1,319	1,522	0.5	5.6	15.4
Property offenses.....	100,328	90,145	95,889	95,201	87,672	67,285	22.9	-32.9	-23.3
Burglary.....	40,561	40,763	42,943	42,289	38,592	20,595	7.0	-49.2	-46.6
Theft.....	40,917	32,633	34,202	33,802	30,346	25,107	8.6	-38.6	-17.3
Motor vehicle theft.....	10,804	9,577	11,670	12,287	12,289	15,749	5.4	45.8	28.2
Forgery, checks, access cards.....	7,477	6,649	6,456	6,160	5,766	4,988	1.7	-33.3	-13.5
Arson.....	569	523	618	663	679	846	0.3	48.7	24.6
Drug offenses.....	115,089	110,535	117,350	133,727	133,996	43,096	14.7	-62.6	-67.8
Narcotics.....	38,199	35,896	35,767	36,438	35,875	11,317	3.9	-70.4	-68.5
Marijuana.....	14,379	12,140	11,763	12,223	11,917	7,987	2.7	-44.5	-33.0
Dangerous drugs.....	61,392	61,375	68,592	83,909	84,882	22,361	7.6	-63.6	-73.7
Other.....	1,119	1,124	1,228	1,157	1,322	1,431	0.5	27.9	8.2

Table 28
ADULT MISDEMEANOR ARRESTS, 2010-2015
 By Offense and Law Enforcement Disposition

Offense and law enforcement disposition	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ^a	2015		Percent change	
						Number	Percent	2010-2015	2014-2015
Total									
Total.....	812,026	741,122	724,337	696,670	713,715	793,522	100.0	-2.3	11.2
Offense									
Assault and battery.....	70,612	67,772	67,264	66,267	67,779	71,980	9.1	1.9	6.2
Burglary.....	535	523	553	567	3,048	18,125	2.3	3,287.9	494.7
Petty theft.....	44,471	49,712	50,156	48,635	48,761	46,612	5.9	4.8	-4.4
Checks and access cards.....	429	400	401	409	468	1,110	0.1	158.7	137.2
Drug offenses ¹	112,085	69,315	72,404	74,998	87,031	157,894	19.9	40.9	81.4

Source: California Department of Justice – Office of the Attorney General. Crime in California 2015.

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