

# Death by --- Geography



**A County by County Analysis of the  
Road to Execution in California**

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**A report by the ACLU of Northern California**

## **Table of Contents**

### **1 Executive Summary**

### **3 Analysis of Data**

### **9 Fact Sheets**

County Death Sentences, 2000-2007

Alameda

Contra Costa

Kern

Los Angeles

Orange

Riverside

Sacramento

San Bernardino

San Diego

San Francisco

San Mateo

Santa Barbara

Santa Clara

Tulare

Ventura

### **26 About the Data**

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## **Executive Summary**

California's death penalty is arbitrary, unnecessary and a waste of critical resources. While the vast majority of California counties have largely abandoned execution in favor of simply sentencing people to die in prison, 10 counties continue to aggressively sentence people to execution, accounting for nearly 85 percent of death sentences since 2000. California's death penalty has become so arbitrary that the county border, not the facts of the case, determines who is sentenced to execution and who is simply sentenced to die in prison. Pursuing executions provides no identifiable benefit to these counties but costs millions.

### *California's Death Penalty is Arbitrary*

The 10 counties that send the most people to death row – Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Alameda, Orange, Contra Costa, San Diego, Sacramento, Tulare, and Ventura counties – have little else in common. These 10 counties also share important qualities with the counties that rarely send people to death row. Factors such as homicide rates, population densities and voting patterns do not correlate with death sentencing. For example:

- A resident of Alameda County is nearly eight times more likely to be sentenced to death than a resident of nearby Santa Clara County, despite similar demographics;
- A person charged with murder in Tulare County is 13 times more likely to be sentenced to execution than someone in neighboring Fresno.

### *California's Death Penalty is Unnecessary*

Seeking execution provides no benefit in terms of reduced crime or higher rates of solving crime to the counties that continue to send many people to death row. For example:

- The four counties that solve the most homicides rarely sentence people to execution;
- Only five of the 10 counties most aggressive in sentencing people to execution solved more than 50 percent of all homicides in their counties in 2005.

### *California's Death Penalty is a Waste of Critical Resources*

As counties struggle to keep teachers and other public servants on the payroll, counties that send many people to death row are wasting resources that could be spent on other county needs. For example:

- Seven of the counties that are most aggressive in sentencing people to execution – Contra Costa, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Tulare, Ventura – spend less per pupil on education than the statewide average;
- In three of these counties – Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino – more than 15 percent of high school students drop out before graduation.

## **Analysis of Data**

### **California's Death Penalty is Arbitrary**

The decision by the state to execute a human being is perhaps the most important decision a government can make. It is a decision that should be made logically and based on the facts of the case, and on a common set of sentencing criteria applied consistently throughout the state.

But in California, whether someone is sentenced to death by execution or death in prison by other causes depends largely on where in the state the crime occurred, not on the facts or common criteria. Only a small number of California counties regularly sentence people to execution while a large majority of counties do not. As a result, the county border has become the dividing line between those sentenced to execution and those sentenced to permanent incarceration. A close examination of California's 24 largest counties reveals just how arbitrarily the death penalty is applied in this state.

There has been a dramatic decrease in death sentencing statewide since 2000. However, a select few counties continue to aggressively send people to death row. From 1977-1999, 10 counties accounted for more than 70 percent of all death sentences. Since 2000, these 10 counties accounted for 83 percent of all death sentences. While death sentencing rates have declined statewide, they have done so at a lower rate on average in these 10 counties, all of which sent five or more people to death row since 2000.

These 10 counties have little else in common. The counties that sentence the most people to execution share as much or more with counties that do not pursue execution or do so rarely. Based on the demographics, crime rates, and voting patterns of these counties on criminal justice initiatives, there is no logical reason why these 10 counties would send people to death row while their neighbors would not.

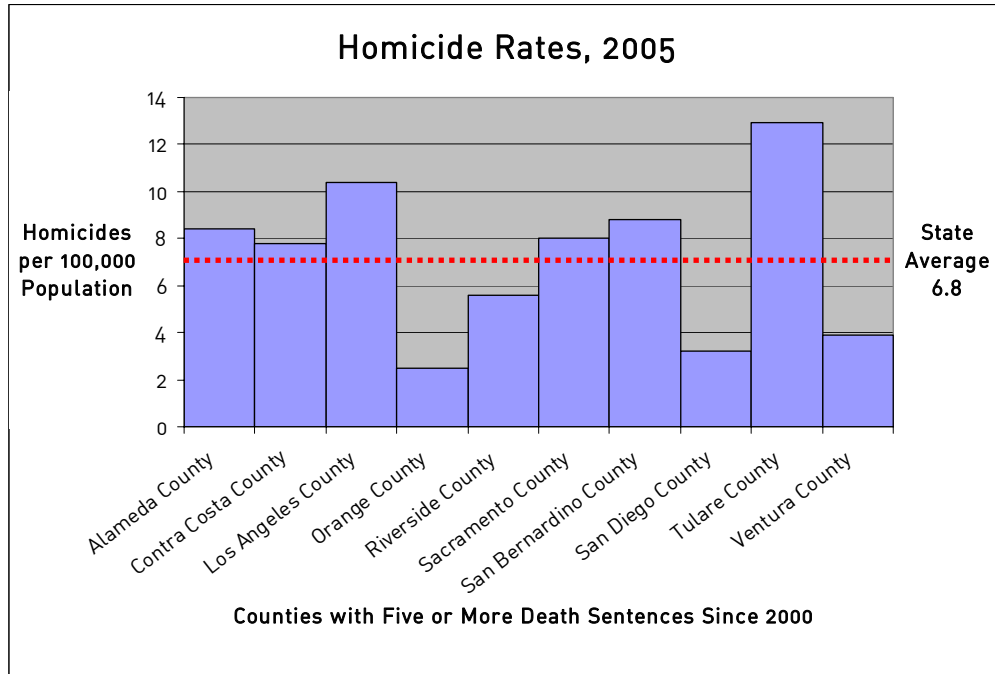
Counties that are aggressive in death sentencing are in both the northern and southern parts of the state, inland and coastal regions. They represent counties that have liberal and conservative views on criminal justice. The counties are both densely and sparsely populated. They have both high and low homicide rates, and high and low rates of solving homicides. Counties that sentence people to execution less frequently exhibit all of these same characteristics.

For example:

- Santa Clara has a larger population than Sacramento, but the two counties have similar population densities. Sacramento sentences almost five times as many people to execution per capita as does Santa Clara.
- Riverside and Tulare sentence people to execution at the highest rates per capita of any county in the state, but the two counties have little else in common. Riverside is four times larger in population and one-and-a-half times larger in geographic size. One-fifth of Tulare's residents live below the poverty line, where as close to one-tenth of Riverside's population does. Tulare's homicide rate is more than twice as high.
- An individual in Alameda is six times more likely to be sentenced to execution than someone in San Mateo, across the San Francisco Bay. Both counties voted against Proposition 21, a ballot measure that increased crimes eligible for the death penalty, at rates far greater than the statewide voting population. The populations of both counties are relatively well educated and have lower than average rates of poverty.

### **California's Death Penalty is Unnecessary**

There is no correlation between the homicide rates in California counties and how aggressive the county is in sentencing people to execution. The chart on the following page demonstrates that the 10 counties that have sent the most people to death row since 2000 vary widely in homicide rates, as measured by the number of homicides for every 100,000 residents. The homicide rates in some of these counties, such as Tulare and Los Angeles, are far greater than the statewide average, and in others, such as Orange and San Diego, are less than half the statewide average.



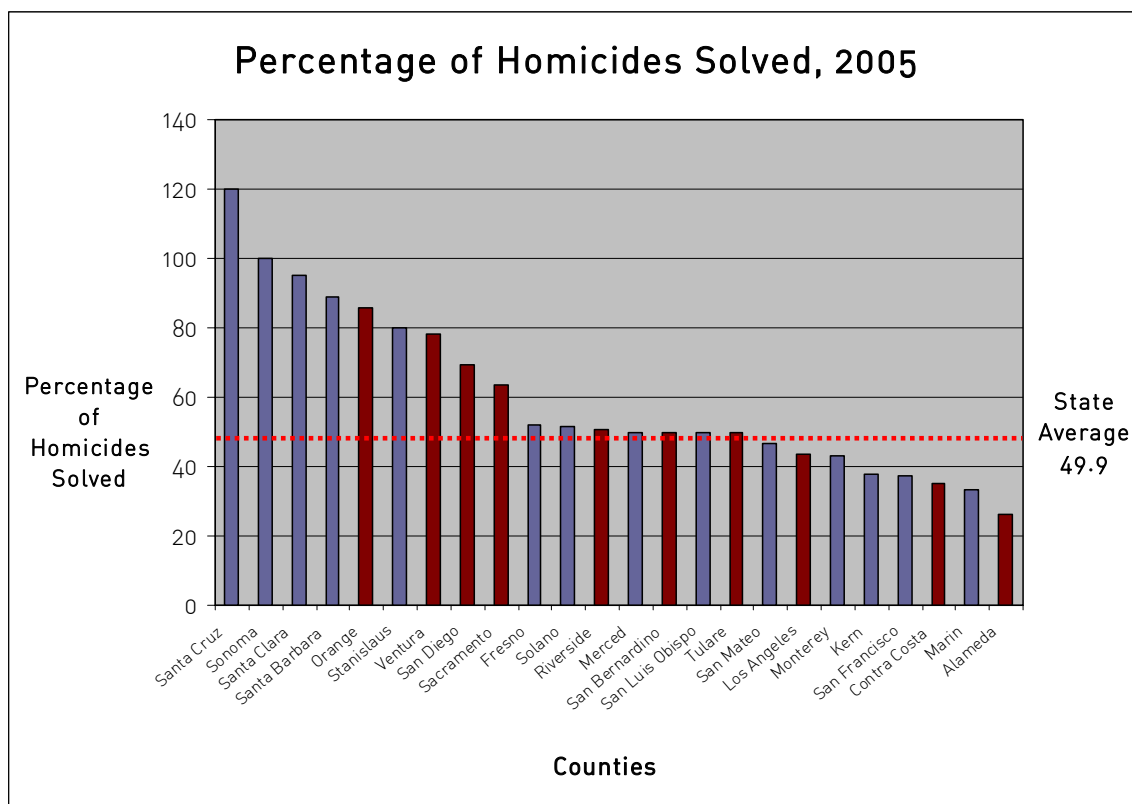
High death sentencing rates cannot be explained by high homicide rates, as four of the 10 most aggressive counties have comparatively low homicide rates. At the same time, aggressively sentencing people to execution does not result in a lower homicide rate for the county: Five aggressive counties have higher homicide rates than neighboring counties that rarely send people to death row. When we consider the fact that 59 people have died on death row awaiting execution, more than four times the number that have actually been executed, it is clear that sentencing people to execution is simply unnecessary.

- Tulare, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Alameda, Sacramento, and Contra Costa counties have murder rates higher than the statewide average and actively sentence people to execution. These six counties account for nearly one-half of all death sentences since 2000.
- Riverside, Ventura, San Diego, and Orange have lower than average homicide rates. These counties are responsible for nearly one-third of all death sentences since 2000.
- The remaining fraction of death sentences, accounting for about 15 percent of all, come from counties with high homicide rates, including Fresno, Kern and Merced, and from counties with low homicide rates, including Monterey, Santa Barbara and Santa Clara.
- Ventura and San Mateo both experience low homicide rates, yet six percent of the murders prosecuted by Ventura end in a sentence of

death by execution, whereas one percent of San Mateo's prosecutions result in the death penalty.

- By contrast, Alameda and Fresno both have higher-than-average homicide rates, yet nine times as many homicide prosecutions in Alameda result in a death sentence compared with Fresno.

The chart below demonstrates that counties that send people to death row have both higher than average and lower than average rates of solving homicides. The “percentage of homicides solved” measures the number of reported homicides that are in fact solved within a given year. The four counties with the highest rate of solving homicides rarely impose execution. Only five of the 10 most aggressive counties solved more than 50 percent of all homicides in 2005. The 10 counties that sent the most people to death row since 2000 appear in red in the following chart.



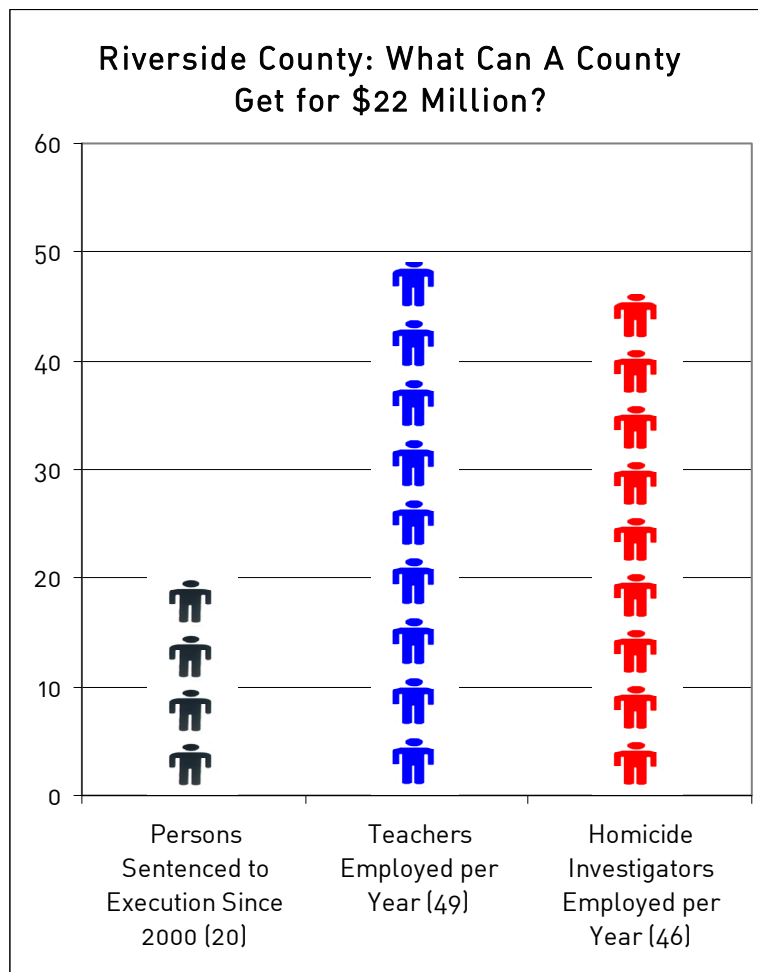


## **California's Death Penalty is a Waste of Resources**

Counties that rarely send people to death row experience the same variety of homicide rates and the same variety of rates of solving homicides. But these counties do save millions of dollars every time they choose to sentence someone to permanent imprisonment rather than death by execution, money that can be spent on other critical county needs. The high death-sentencing counties, in contrast, waste millions seeking execution, a choice that has not provided the communities with any proven benefits to public safety.

It is difficult to know exactly how much each county wastes on death penalty trials because no government agency tracks these expenses. In fact, no government agency even tracks the number of death penalty trials that occur each year. While the number of actual death sentences in each county is known, the number of costly death penalty trials that resulted in a lesser sentence is not. Being conservative, we have estimated that each sentence of execution costs the county at least \$1.1 million more than death in prison from other causes.

- Five counties – Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Alameda, and Orange – have wasted an estimated \$10 million or more each seeking death sentences since 2000.
- Since 2000, Riverside sentenced 20 people to execution, costing the county at least \$22.2 million above and beyond what it would have cost to simply sentence them to die in prison from other causes.
- The \$22.2 million wasted during that eight-year period could have paid the salaries of 49 experienced teachers or 46 new homicide investigators. Riverside ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> out of 24 counties on education expenditures, per pupil, and solved just over 50 percent of homicides in 2005.
- In three of the five counties – Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside -- public schools also spent less than the state average on educating their students.
- Three of the five counties – Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Alameda – suffered from higher than average homicide rates and solved no more than half of all homicides in 2005.



### Fact Sheets

The next page ranks the 24 most populous counties by three measures of death sentencing: actual death sentences, death sentences per capita and death sentences per murder charged. Following the rankings is a close examination of 15 of these counties, including the 10 that have sentenced five or more people to death row since 2000, and five others that have sentenced fewer. The sheets compare information about the counties' death sentencing practices, homicide rates, homicide clearance rates and spending on public programs. Finally, the money wasted on executions is calculated for each county, and the sacrifices to public spending are highlighted.

### County Death Sentencing from 2000-2007

Total Death Sentences		Death Sentences per Capita		Death Sentences per Murder Charged	
California (Total)	166	Tulare	1.630	Ventura	0.063
Los Angeles	44	Riverside	1.294	Riverside	0.041
Riverside	20	Contra Costa	0.949	Contra Costa	0.035
San Bernardino	14	Alameda	0.898	San Luis Obispo	0.029
Alameda	13	San Bernardino	0.819	Alameda	0.027
Orange	10	Ventura	0.664	Santa Barbara	0.023
Contra Costa	9	Kern	0.605	Tulare	0.021
San Diego	9	Sacramento	0.572	Monterey	0.020
Sacramento	7	Santa Barbara	0.500	Orange	0.017
Tulare	6	Monterey	0.498	San Bernardino	0.017
Ventura	5	California (Average)	0.490	Merced	0.016
Kern	4	Merced	0.475	San Diego	0.015
Monterey	2	Los Angeles	0.462	California (Average)	0.014
Santa Barbara	2	San Luis Obispo	0.405	Sonoma	0.014
Santa Clara	2	Orange	0.351	Kern	0.013
Fresno	1	San Diego	0.320	Los Angeles	0.011
Merced	1	Stanislaus	0.224	Sacramento	0.011
San Luis Obispo	1	Sonoma	0.218	San Mateo	0.011
San Mateo	1	San Mateo	0.141	Santa Clara	0.007
Sonoma	1	Fresno	0.125	Stanislaus	0.005
Stanislaus	1	Santa Clara	0.119	Fresno	0.003
Marin	0	Marin	0	Marin	0
San Francisco	0	San Francisco	0	San Francisco	0
Santa Cruz	0	Santa Cruz	0	Santa Cruz	0
Solano	0	Solano	0	Solano	0

# Alameda County

**Bottom Line: \$14.3 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Alameda ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in total death sentences since 2000,  
while nearly 3 out of 4 homicides go unsolved.**

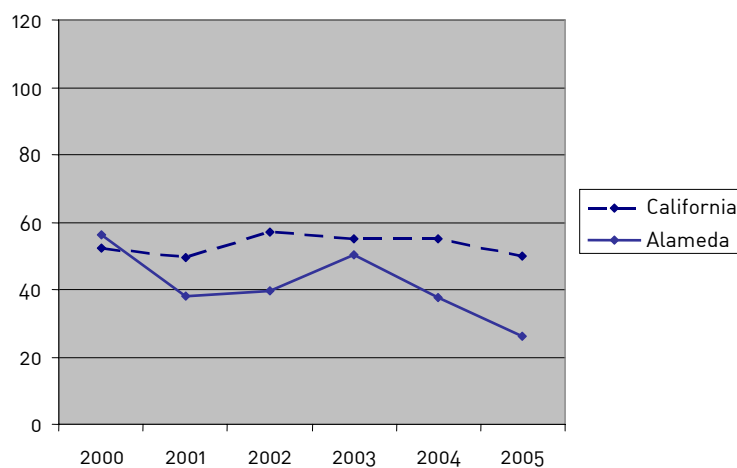
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Alameda County	8.4 per 100,000	26.2	13
Rank among 24 counties	8 <sup>th</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Alameda County	\$373.10	\$7,761	12.8%
Rank among 24 counties	3 <sup>rd</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>

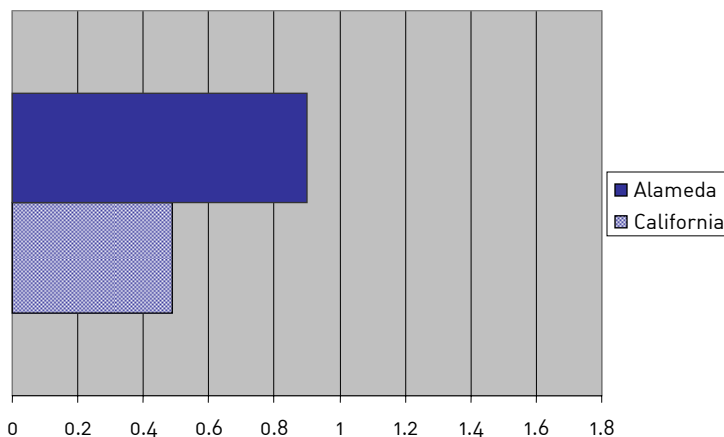
## Alameda County Quick Facts:

- 13 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$14.3 million** Alameda County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - o **31** additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - o **29** additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# Contra Costa County

**Bottom Line: \$9.9 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

Contra Costa's homicide rate has been rising, despite the high number of death sentences, while nearly two-thirds of homicides go unsolved.

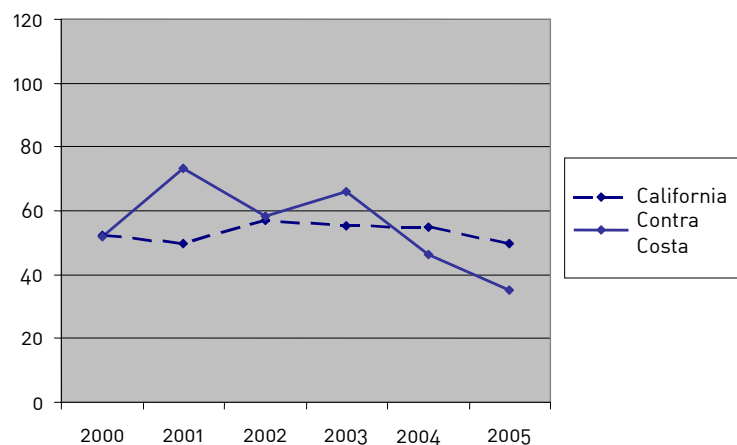
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved, 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Contra Costa County	7.8 per 100,000	35	9
Rank among 24 counties	10 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Contra Costa County	\$247.74	\$7,306	9.3%
Rank among 24 counties	17 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>

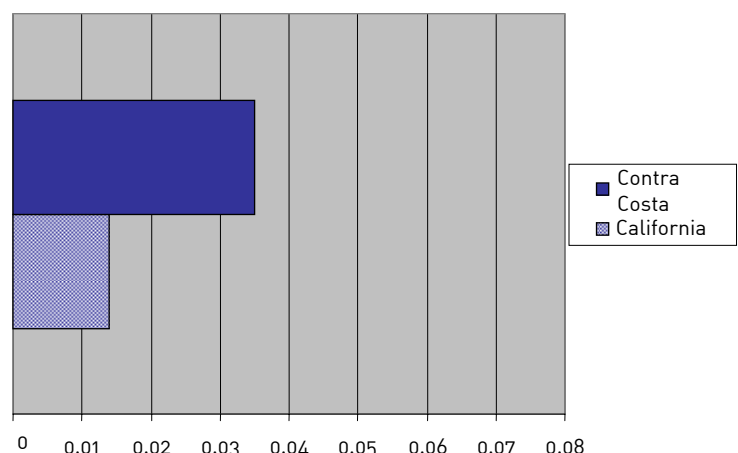
## Contra Costa County Quick Facts:

- 9 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$9.9 million** Contra Costa County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - o 22 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - o 21 additional homicide investigators per year.

Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005



Death Sentences per Murder Charged, 2000-2007



# Kern County

**Bottom Line: \$4.4 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Kern has sentenced 4 people to execution, ranking 7<sup>th</sup> per capita. It has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest homicide rate and 5<sup>th</sup> highest school dropout rate.**

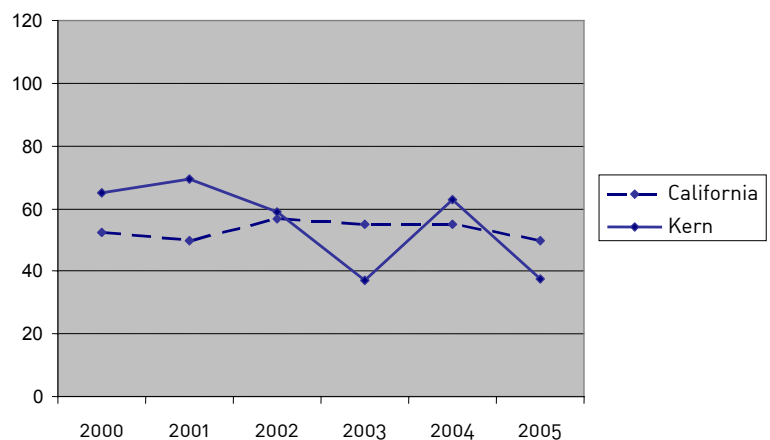
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Kern County	9 per 100,000	37.7	4
Rank among 24 counties	4 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Kern County	\$196.18	\$7,527	16.7%
Rank among 24 counties	22 <sup>nd</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>

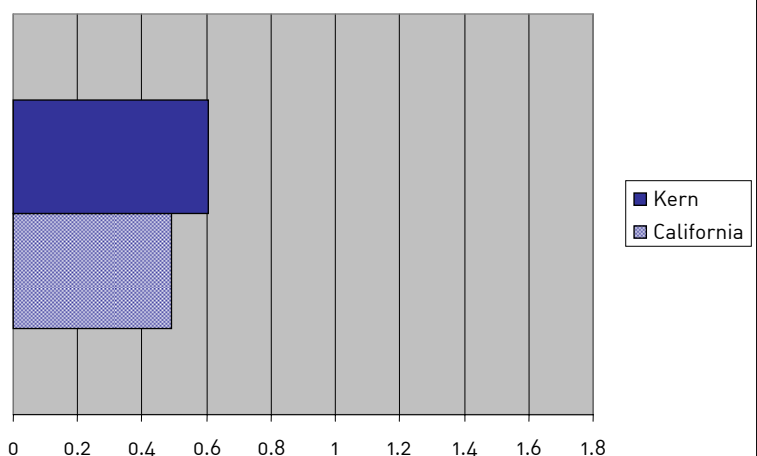
## Kern County Quick Facts:

- 4 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$4.4 million** Kern County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 10 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 9 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# Los Angeles County

**Bottom Line: \$48.4 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Los Angeles has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest homicide rate. It leads the state in law enforcement spending and total death sentencing.**

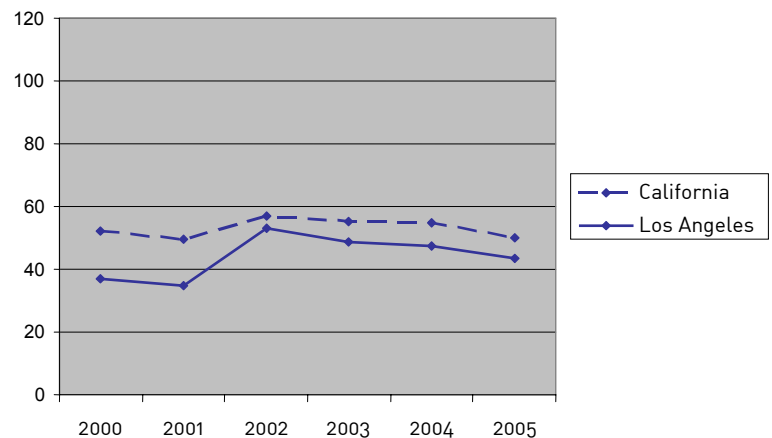
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Los Angeles County	10.4 per 100,000	43.6	44
Rank among 24 counties	3 <sup>rd</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Los Angeles County	\$403.51	\$7,891	17.3%
Rank among 24 counties	1 <sup>st</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>

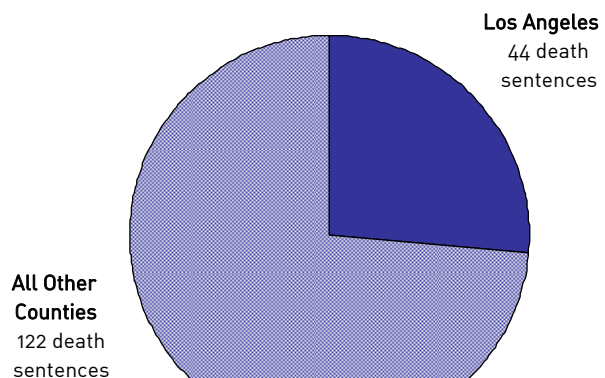
## Los Angeles County Quick Facts:

- 44 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$48.4 million** Los Angeles County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 107 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 101 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Share of Total Death Sentences, 2000-2007**



# Orange County

**Bottom Line: \$11 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Orange ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in overall death sentencing while it spends less than the statewide average on education.**

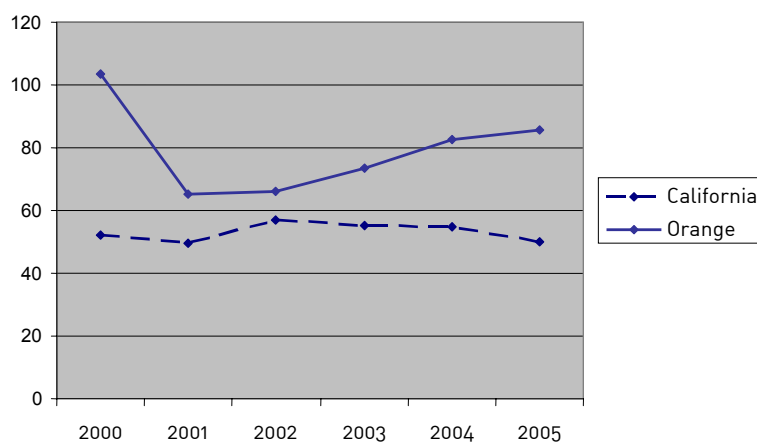
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Orange County	2.5 per 100,000	85.7	10
Rank among 24 counties	18 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita, 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Orange County	\$304.73	\$7,228	5.9%
Rank among 24 counties	7 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>

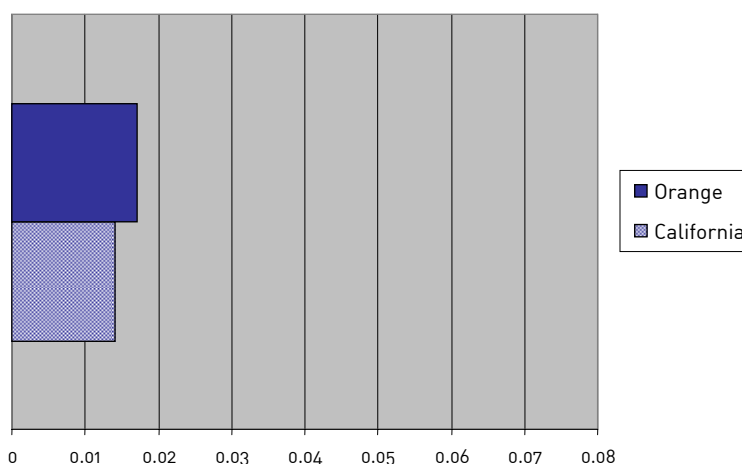
## Orange County Quick Facts:

- 10 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$11 million** Orange County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - **24** additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - **23** additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per Murder Charged, 2000-2007**





# Riverside County

**Bottom Line: \$22 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Riverside spends the second highest amount seeking execution.**

**It ranks second from the bottom for spending on education.**

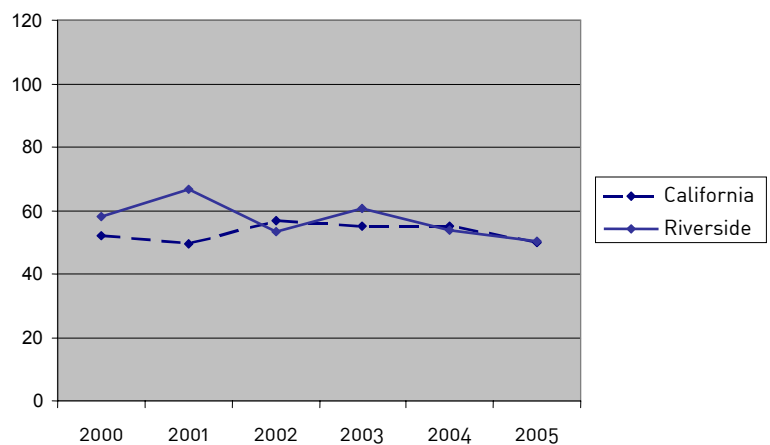
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Riverside County	5.6 per 100,000	50.5	20
Rank among 24 counties	13 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Riverside County	\$300.36	\$6,945	15.2%
Rank among 24 counties	8 <sup>th</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>

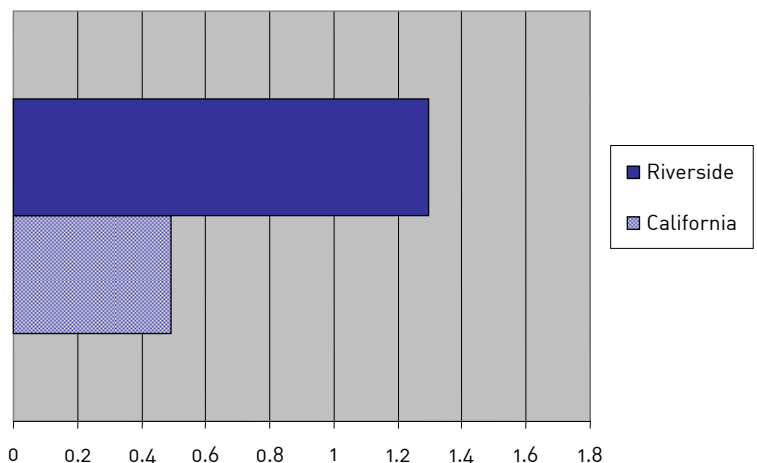
## Riverside County Quick Facts:

- 20 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$22 million** Riverside County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 49 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 46 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences Per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# Sacramento County

**Bottom Line: \$7.7 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**While Sacramento sends a large number of people to death row, its homicide rate is rising and its rate of solving homicides is declining.**

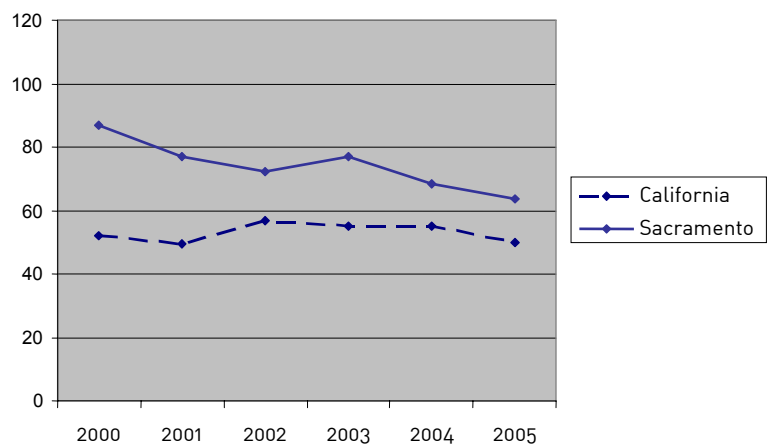
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Sacramento County	8 per 100,000	63.6	7
Rank among 24 counties	9 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Sacramento County	\$299.54	\$7,324	12.9%
Rank among 24 counties	9 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>

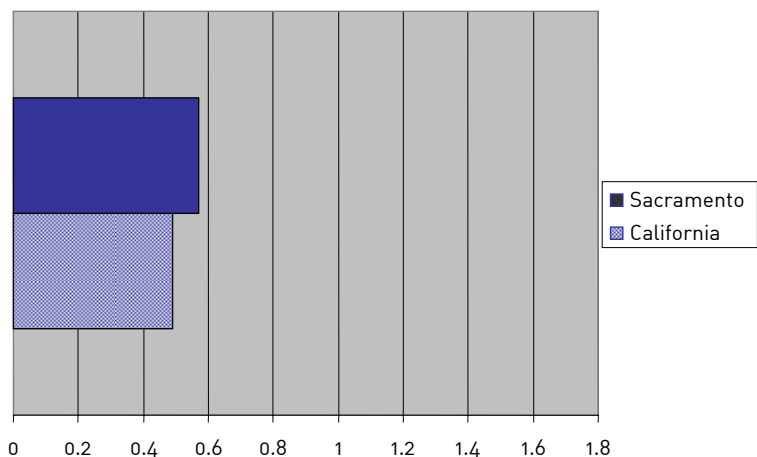
## Sacramento County Quick Facts:

- 7 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$7.7 million** Sacramento County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 17 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 16 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# San Bernardino County

**Bottom Line: \$15.4 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**San Bernardino ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> for total death sentences and 1<sup>st</sup> for high school dropouts. It is near the bottom in education spending.**

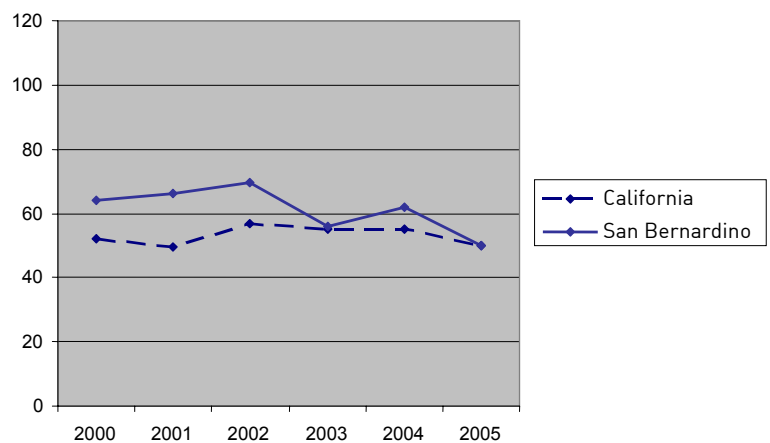
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
San Bernardino County	8.8 per 100,000	50	14
Rank among 24 counties	5 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
San Bernardino County	\$279.91	\$7,046	20.6%
Rank among 24 counties	12 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>

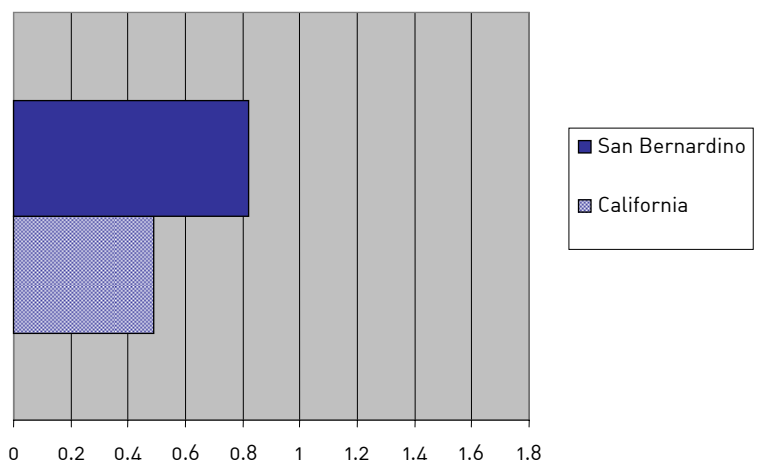
## San Bernardino County Quick Facts:

- 14 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$15.4 million** San Bernardino County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - **34** additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - **32** additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# San Diego County

**Bottom Line: \$9.9 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**San Diego sentences more people to execution per murder charged than average. It ranks 8<sup>th</sup> for highest rate of school drop outs.**

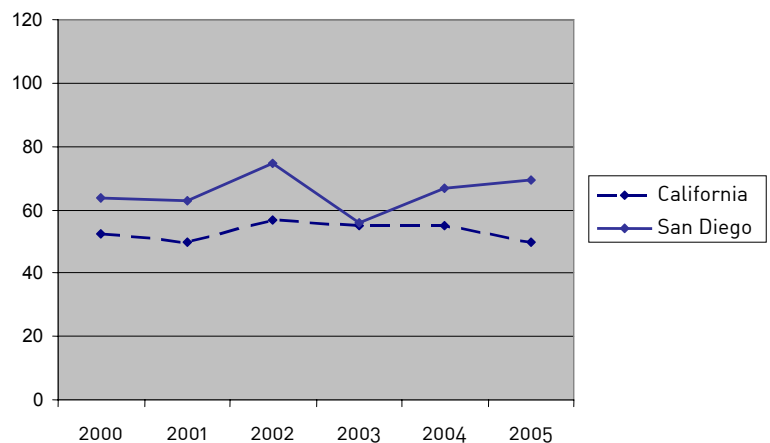
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
San Diego County	3.2 per 100,000	69.4	9
Rank among 24 counties	17 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
San Diego County	\$274.74	\$7,813	14.3%
Rank among 24 counties	13 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>

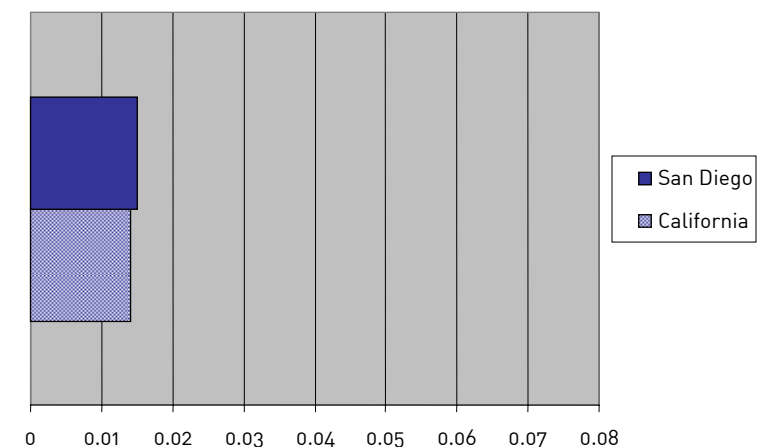
## San Diego County Quick Facts:

- 9 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$9.9 million** San Diego County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 22 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 21 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per Murder Charged, 2000-2007**



# San Francisco County

**San Francisco has not wasted any money on executions since 1991.**

**The death penalty “drains millions of dollars from efforts that more effectively protect public safety and promote justice.” –District Attorney Kamala Harris**

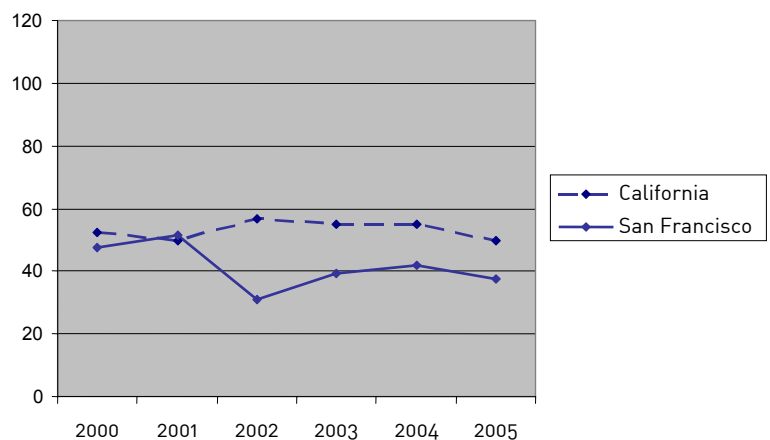
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
San Francisco County	12.1 per 100,000	37.5	0
Rank among 24 counties	2 <sup>nd</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup> (last)

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
San Francisco County	\$378.71	\$7,593	10.9%
Rank among 24 counties	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>

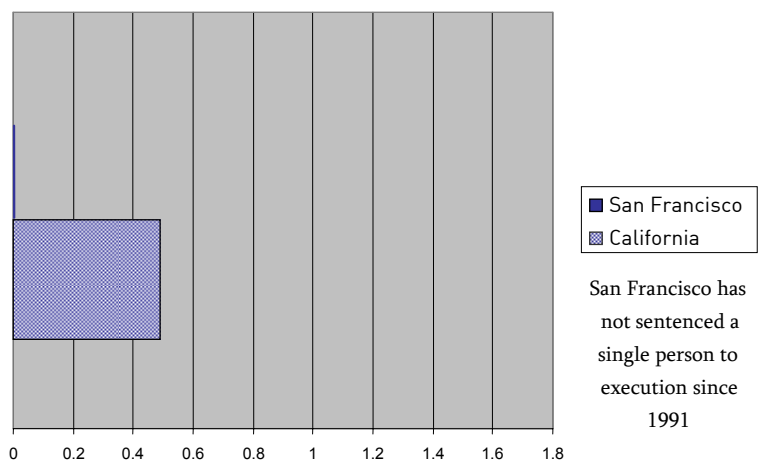
## San Francisco County Quick Facts:

- 0 death sentences since 1991.
- San Francisco County has not spent additional money seeking execution since 2000.
- Every time San Francisco avoids pursuing a death sentence, it saves at least **\$1.1 million**.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# San Mateo County

**Bottom Line: \$1.1 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**San Mateo rarely pursues execution, while it ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> for spending on education and graduates the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of students.**

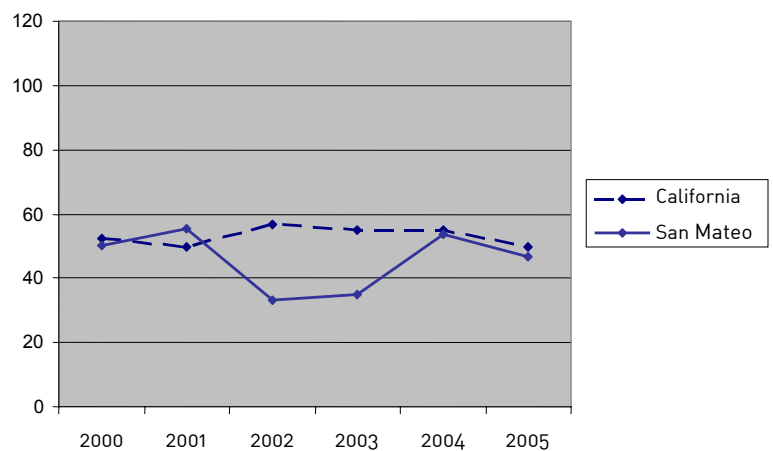
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
San Mateo County	4.2 per 100,000	46.7	1
Rank among 24 counties	14 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	15 (tie)

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
San Mateo County	\$316.13	\$8,223	5.3%
Rank among 24 counties	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>

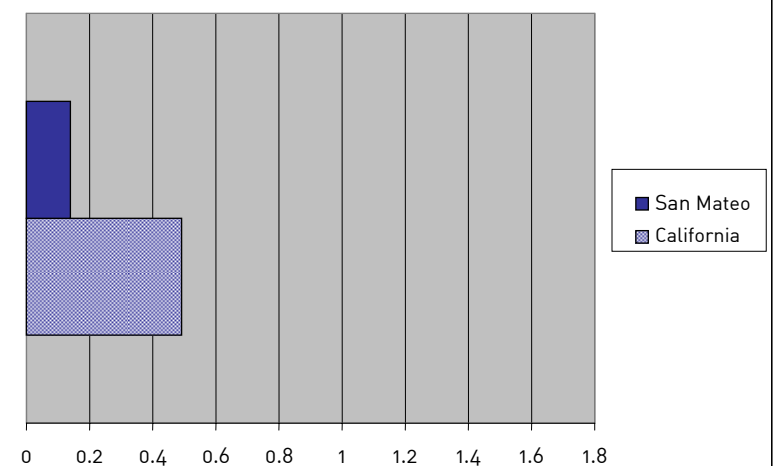
## San Mateo County Quick Facts:

- 1 death sentence since 2000.
- The estimated **\$1.1 million** San Mateo County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 2 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 2 additional homicide investigators per year.

Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005



Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007



# Santa Barbara County

**Bottom Line: \$2.2 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Santa Barbara enjoys a low homicide rate and solves a high percentage of crime, while sentencing only 2 people to death since 2000.**

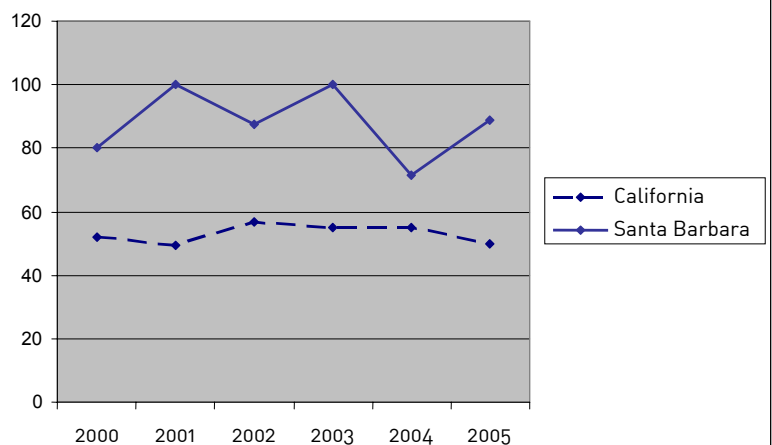
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Santa Barbara County	2.1 per 100,000	88.9	2
Rank among 24 counties	20 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	12 (tie)

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Santa Barbara County	\$262.82	\$7,475	8.4%
Rank among 24 counties	15 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>

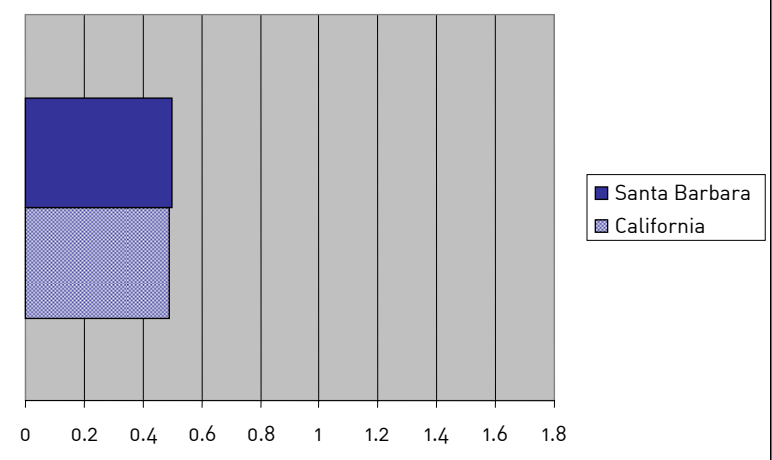
## Santa Barbara County Quick Facts:

- 2 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$2.2 million** Santa Barbara County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 5 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 5 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# Santa Clara County

**Bottom Line: \$2.2 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Santa Clara seeks death sentences at a low rate per capita and boasts a low homicide rate and high rate of solving crime.**

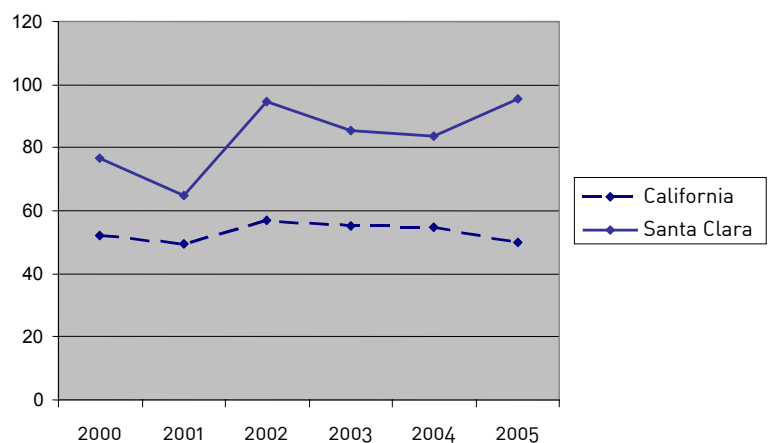
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Santa Clara County	2.4 per 100,000	95.3	2
Rank among 24 counties	19 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	12 (tie)

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending, per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Santa Clara County	\$281.39	\$7,604	13.7%
Rank among 24 counties	11 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>

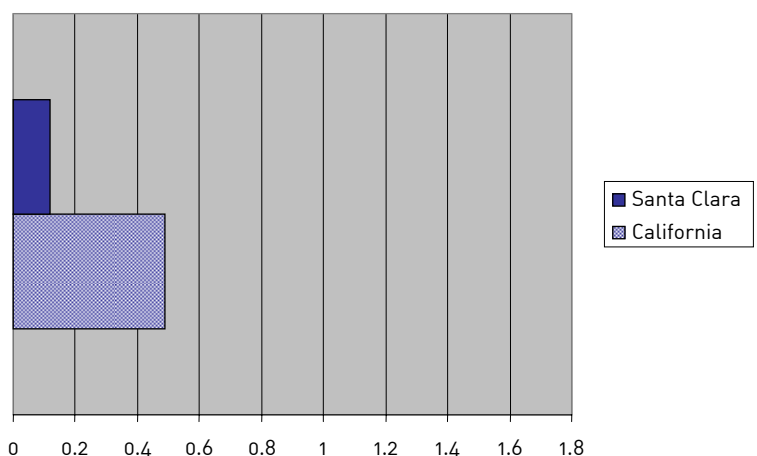
Ventura County Quick Facts:

- 2 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$2.2 million** Santa Clara County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 5 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 5 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**





# Tulare County

**Bottom Line: \$6.6 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Tulare has the highest homicide rate and the highest death sentencing rate per capita, while ranking lowest on law enforcement spending.**

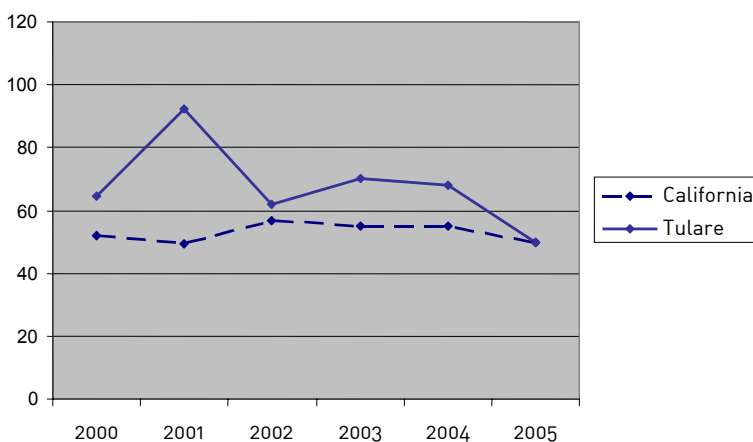
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Tulare County	12.9 per 100,000	50	6
Rank among 24 counties	1 <sup>st</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Tulare County	\$190.01	\$7,186	8.6%
Rank among 24 counties	24 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>

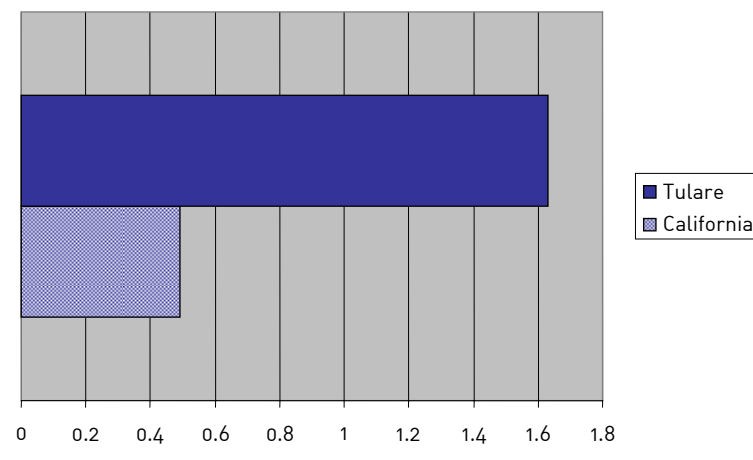
## Tulare County Quick Facts:

- 6 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$6.6 million** Tulare County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - 14 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
  - or
  - 13 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per 100,000 Population, 2000-2007**



# Ventura County

**Bottom Line: \$5.5 million or more wasted seeking execution since 2000.**

**Ventura has the highest rate of death sentences per murder charged and ranks near the bottom for school spending.**

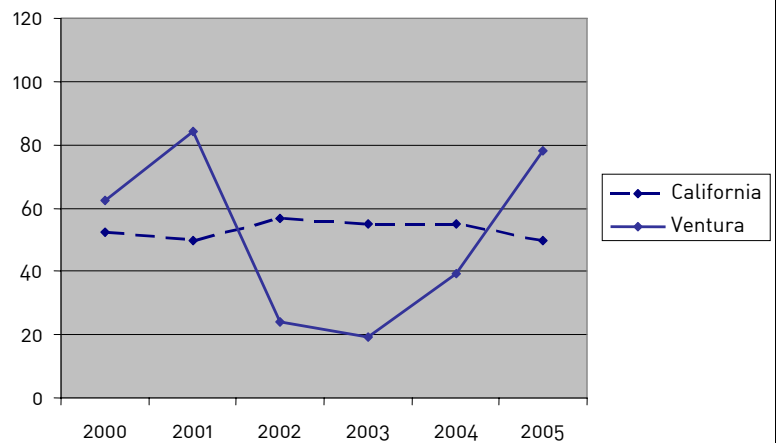
	Homicide Rate 2005	Percent of Homicides Solved 2005	Death Sentences Since 2000
Ventura County	3.9 per 100,000	78.1	5
Rank among 24 counties	15 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	10

	Law Enforcement Spending per Capita 2003-2004	Education Spending per Student 2003-2004	High School Dropout Rate 2005
Ventura County	\$311.89	\$6,994	9%
Rank among 24 counties	6 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>

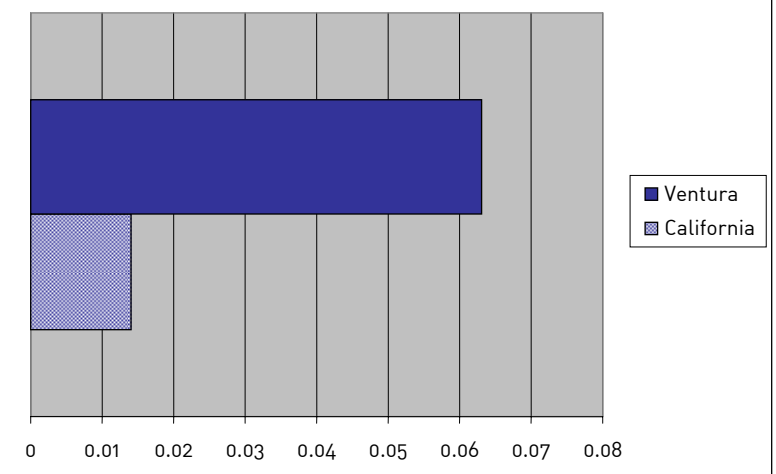
## Ventura County Quick Facts:

- 5 death sentences since 2000.
- The estimated **\$5.5 million** Ventura County has spent seeking execution since 2000 could have funded the salaries for:
  - o 12 additional experienced high school teachers per year;
- or
- o 11 additional homicide investigators per year.

**Percentage of Homicides Solved, 2000-2005**



**Death Sentences per Murder Charged, 2000-2007**



## **About the Data in this Report**

In this report, we compare data for California counties with populations greater than 200,000, as reported in the 2000 Census. This threshold takes into consideration 24 counties and more than 91 percent of California's population. Because small changes in data have a disproportionate impact in counties of smaller sizes, the 34 counties with populations lower than 200,000 were not included in comparisons.

All rankings are sorted in descending order. A ranking of "1<sup>st</sup>" indicates that the county has the greatest percentage or rank for that category.

The term "percentage of homicides solved" refers to the "homicide clearance rate," which is the total number of homicides solved in a given year, divided by the number of homicides reported in that year. Some counties report homicide clearance rates greater than 100. In these cases, law enforcement agencies have reported solving a greater number of homicides than were committed within that year; some of the homicides solved that year would have been committed in previous years. This occurs rarely and in counties with particularly low homicide rates.

The term "death sentences per capita" refers to the total number of death sentences handed down in a county between the years 2000-2007 inclusive, divided by the 2000 population estimate, and multiplied by 100,000. This number thus reflects the number of death sentences relative to the population.

The term "death sentence per murder charged" refers to the total number of death sentences within a county between the years 2000-2007 inclusive, divided by the total number of criminal complaints charging murder for the years 1998-2005. This difference in years covered is due to the fact that reliable data about the number of complaints sought are only available through 2005. It also takes into account the delay between filing of a complaint and sentencing.

The number of other personnel that could have been hired with funds spent pursuing death sentences was calculated by multiplying the number of death sentences in a given county, 2000-2007 inclusive, by \$1.1 million, the estimated extra costs of a death penalty trial as compared to a normal homicide trial. This sum is divided by estimated annual salaries for experienced teachers and starting homicide investigators (\$57,651 and \$60,000 respectively), and then divided by eight years.

The sources for all of the data in this report are

California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center

Homicide rates and homicide clearance rates, available at:

<http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/>

California Department of Education

High school dropout information available at:

<http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/Navigation/fsTwoPanel.asp?bottom=%2Fprofile%2Easp%3Flevel%3D05%26reportNumber%3D16>

Education expenditures per pupil available at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/ec/>

Teacher salary information available at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa/salaries0203.asp>

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Capital punishment information available at:

[http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports\\_Research/capital.html](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports_Research/capital.html)

U.S. Census Bureau, California information available at:

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06000.html>

Voting Results on Propositions, available at

[http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_elections.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_elections.htm)

See also Ellen Kreitzberg, A Review of Special Circumstances in California Death Penalty Cases: Special Report to the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice (Jan. 10, 2008), available at

<http://ccfaj.org/documents/reports/dp/expert/Kreitzberg.pdf>