

The CCPOA and California State Politics

CCPOA = California Correctional Peace Officers Association

“The Power this prison guards’ union wields inside our prisons, legislative chambers and governors office disturbs me. It should disturb every citizen.”

-- Judith Tannenbaum, English teacher, formally at San Quentin State Prison

Since 1984 California has built **21 new prisons** and spends **over 4 billion dollars per year** maintaining them.

California now has the 3rd largest prison system **IN THE WORLD**, following China and the United States as a whole.

There were **163,840 PRISONERS** in California State prisons at last official count.



In the midst of this, membership in the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) has mushroomed and they have become one of the most powerful political groups in the State.

THE FACTS on the CCPOA...

---> Since 1980 the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) has grown from 5,600 members to over 28,000 members.

---> The CCPOA has a 17 million dollar budget and 17 lawyers on staff.

---> In California, the average prison guard salary in 1996 was \$44,000 - \$10,000 more than the average salary of a California public school teacher that year.

---> The CCPOA claims they have the “Toughest Beat in the State.” However, according to statistics on occupational fatalities, while there were:

- **13 guards killed on duty in 1999**
There were also:
- **52 Construction Workers**
- **113 Transportation workers and**
- **11 Administrators (in a variety of offices across the State) killed in that same year.**

WHAT DOES THE CCPOA DO?



The CCPOA is the **biggest contributor to political campaigns** in California. The CCPOA gives twice as much in political contributions as the California Teachers Association, yet it is one tenth its size.



In 1998, the CCPOA gave over **\$2 million** to Governor Gray Davis, **\$763,000** to the media, and over **\$100,000 to Proposition 184, the 3 Strikes law**. The 3 Strikes law mandated that convicted felons with one prior felony got twice the normal sentence for their 2nd strike, and convicted felons with two or more prior felonies would get at least 3 times the normal sentence or 25 years (whichever is more) for their 3rd strike. The CCPOA has a vested interest in locking up more and more Californians.



California's Doris Tate Crime Victims Bureau (the driving force behind the State's "3 strikes law") gets **78%** of its funding, along with free office space and lobbying staff, from the CCPOA. The CCPOA also provides **95%** of the funding for Crime Victims United, another Political Action Committee pressing for tougher laws and longer sentences.

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For more info, see our web site: prisonactivist.org