



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

YOUTH ALIVE!
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February 8, 2019

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
California State Capitol P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94293

Re: Assembly Bill 166 (Gabriel) - Support

Dear Assemblymember Gabriel,

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, Oakland's anchor organization for violence prevention, intervention and healing, we are proud to support Assembly Bill 166 (Gabriel) to provide Medi-Cal coverage for violence prevention services for gunshot victims

Youth ALIVE!'s Caught in the Crossfire program, founded by Sherman Spears, was the very first hospital-based violence intervention program (HVIP). This program is now a federally recognized best practice, and a proven model that has been replicated in dozens of cities across California and other parts of the United States, as well as abroad.

Nationally, some studies have shown that, without intervention, as many as 44% of violently injured patients will return to medical care for a subsequent injury. It is irresponsible, immoral and expensive to discharge violently injured patients without providing them with the appropriate aftercare to heal and remain injury-free – which is what HVIPs provide. While modern medicine has saved countless lives from violent injuries, most healthcare systems routinely fail to address violently injured patients' risk of re-injury after these patients exit the hospital. This creates a revolving door of violent injury and trauma centers too often see the same victims repeatedly. HVIPs use innovative and effective patient-focused strategies to break that cycle and reduce rates for violent injury recidivism. Evaluations have repeatedly demonstrated that integrating HVIP services into hospital trauma centers corresponds with large reductions in rates of injury recidivism and long-term increases in patients' wellbeing.

Providing Medi-Cal coverage for services provided by Violence Prevention Professionals will help expand utilization of Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs in California and would likely even result in cost savings to the state Medicaid program and to our justice system. With AB 166, HVIPs can continue their preventative work and harness state and federal funding to reduce the cycle of violence that plagues many of our cities and destroys many of our communities.

For these reasons, Youth ALIVE! supports AB 166.

Sincerely,

Anne Marks
Executive Director

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