



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

April 3, 2014

The Honorable Carol Liu, Chair
Senate Education Committee

Honorable Members
Senate Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 2083
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1165 (Mitchell, Block. Pupil instruction: sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention education)--SUPPORT

Dear Chair Liu and Members:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, a violence prevention and intervention non-profit based in Oakland, I am pleased to pledge our support for SB 1165. Youth ALIVE! understands the importance of prevention to help keep youth safe. Our Teens on Target program educates students on family and other types of violence including neglect, physical, and sexual abuse. More detailed education on this topic is necessary.

In the U.S., the average age of entry into the sex trade is 12-14 years old. Traffickers recruit children in or around schools and other locations where youth tend to congregate, such as parks, transit stops, malls, shelters, and group homes. Traffickers have even been known to use other students or young men acting as boyfriends to recruit classmates and friends.

Schools are in a unique position to make students aware of potential dangers. Schools also have an obligation to foster campus environments that promote student safety. By authorizing school districts to provide sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education, and by requiring that such education be included in the health framework, SB 1165 will help equip children with skills to circumvent recruiting tactics.

Almost every trafficked victim has a history of sexual abuse, which begins a continuum of sexual exploitation. Children recruited into the commercial sex trade have long lasting physical and psychological scars, and are more likely to live on the fringes of society suffering from homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction and incarceration. While many positive efforts have been made to provide restorative services to survivors of trafficking, more must be done to prevent this exploitation from occurring in the first place. SB 1165 is part of that solution and we urge you to support it.

We thank you for your leadership to protect California's children from exploitation.

Sincerely,

Anne Marks
Executive Director

Youth ALIVE is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID is 94-3143254.

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