



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

April 7, 2015

Senator Loni Hancock, Chair
Senate Public Safety Committee
Room 2031, State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via FAX: [\(916\) 445-4688](tel:9164454688)

YOUTH ALIVE!
3300 Elm Street
Oakland, CA 94609
Tel: (510) 594-2588
Fax: (510) 594-0667
mail@youthalive.org
www.youthalive.org

Dear Senator Hancock:

**HONORARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA
Former Mayor of Los Angeles

DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

EDWARD JAMES OLMOS
Actor

AL JARREAU
Singer/Musician

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, I am writing in strong support for **SB 124 (Leno)**, a bill that would limit the harmful practice of solitary confinement against youth in the juvenile justice system. Youth ALIVE! is a violence prevention and intervention organization, and helps young people become leaders and advocates for change in their communities.

SB 124 seeks to curb the overuse and abuse of solitary confinement. This bill is in keeping with efforts in several other states to ban or limit the use of solitary confinement — a practice widely defined throughout the U.S. and internationally as torture.

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Among other things, SB 124 would:

- Define solitary confinement as the placement of a person in a locked room or cell alone with minimal or no contact with persons other than guards, correctional staff, and attorneys.
- Provide that solitary confinement shall only be used when a young person poses an immediate and substantial risk of harm to others and not to exceed four hours.

MICHAEL NIETO
Deputy District Attorney
Alameda County
District Attorney's Office
Oakland, CA

Youth ALIVE! works closely with young people who are impacted by crime and we know the trauma they often experience in their communities as well as in the institutions meant to help them.

ELIZABETH SEKERA
Clinic Director
Lyon-Martin Health Services
San Francisco, CA

In addition to worsening recidivism rates, solitary confinement damages mental health and increases risk for suicide. Nationally, over half of the youth who committed suicide while in a correctional facility were in solitary confinement at the time and 62% had a history of being placed in solitary confinement. Solitary confinement is contrary to the stated rehabilitative and treatment goals of the juvenile justice system, and contrary to our values as a society. SB 124 offers California an historic opportunity to limit this dangerous and inhumane practice. For these reasons, we support SB 124 and strongly urge your support as well.

SIARA SPRIGGS
Residential Counselor
The Refuge, Inc.
Oakland, CA

Sincerely,

LA'BAN WADE II
Student
UC Berkeley

Anne Marks, Executive Director
Youth ALIVE!

STAN WEISNER
Director Behavioral and
Biological Sciences
UC Berkeley Extension
Berkeley, CA

GREGORY VICTORINO
Chief, Division of Trauma
Alameda Health System
Oakland, CA

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

ANNE C. MARKS
Executive Director
Youth ALIVE!
Oakland, CA