



PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPING YOUTH LEADERS

March 25, 2016

The Honorable Loni Hancock, Chair
Senate Public Safety Committee
State Capitol, Room 2031
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: SB 894 – Reporting Lost/Stolen Firearms

Dear Senator Hancock:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE! I write to express support for Senate Bill 894, which seeks to improve public safety by requiring that every person whose firearm is lost or stolen notify local law enforcement within 5 days of the time the person knew or reasonably should have known that their firearm had been lost or stolen.

Youth ALIVE! is a violence prevention and intervention organization that helps young people become leaders and advocates for the change they would like to see in their communities through our Teens on Target Program, mentors and supports healing for young people who have been violently injured through our Caught in the Crossfire program, and works with families grieving in the wake of a homicide through our Khadafy Washington Project.

SB 894 would provide a tool for law enforcement to detect firearms trafficking and charge criminals who engage in such activity. A requirement to report lost or stolen firearms would assist in the identification and prosecution of "straw buyers," individuals who purchase guns legally, then sell them to people who cannot legally purchase firearms such as gang members, criminals, or minors. When crime guns are traced to straw buyers, they falsely claim that the firearm was lost or stolen. The lack of a reporting requirement enables straw buyers to shield their criminal activity and continue to sell guns illegally to dangerous criminals. A reporting requirement would likewise assist in the prosecution of armed criminals who falsely claim that a crime gun traced to them was lost or stolen when in fact it was used in a crime. It also enables criminals to hide their involvement in a crime and evade apprehension.

SB 894 would help law enforcement efforts to disarm individuals who possess a firearm and subsequently becomes prohibited by law from purchasing or possessing firearms because of falling into a prohibited class. When law enforcement attempts to recover these illegal firearms, gun owners may falsely claim that the gun was lost or stolen. A reporting requirement would improve the efficiency and implementation of the state's Armed and Prohibited Persons System Program, in which law enforcement agencies work to proactively disarm prohibited individuals before they harm themselves or others.

Finally, SB 894 would alert law enforcement to the existence of a stolen gun in their jurisdictions and facilitate the return of stolen firearms to their rightful owners. The recovery of stolen guns protects communities and reduces gun violence. Youth ALIVE! supports this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 894.

Sincerely,

Anne Marks
Executive Director

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

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