



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

YOUTH ALIVE!
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June 26, 2020

The Honorable Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer Sr.
Public Safety Committee Chair
California State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, 1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANNE MARKS
Executive Director
Youth ALIVE!
Oakland, CA

RE: Support for SB 1290 Realizing Debt Free Youth Justice for All

Dear Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer:

Youth ALIVE! supports Senate Bill 1290 (Durazo, Mitchell) to end the harmful collection of administrative fees from families with youth in the juvenile legal system and from young people 21 and under in the criminal (adult) legal system. SB 1290 will further the aim of Senate Bill 190 (2017), a bipartisan bill that prohibited counties from charging youth and their families new administrative fees starting January 1, 2018. SB 190 did not, however, stop counties from collecting fees assessed prior to 2018.

Youth ALIVE! is a nationally recognized community-based organization known for initiating an alliance to treat violence as a public health crisis and developing young leaders in the process. Tasked as Oakland’s anchor organization for violence prevention, intervention, and healing, Youth ALIVE! has maintained a successful track record of implementing evidence-based violence intervention and prevention services. Our experience serving justice-impacted youth through our Pathways program informs our support of SB 1290, as many of our youth are overburdened by the punitive terms and conditions that result from system involvement, only making their opportunity for rehabilitation more difficult.

The passage of SB 190 demonstrates growing recognition that juvenile and criminal legal system fees are regressive and racially discriminatory. As a 2017 [study](#) by the Policy Advocacy Clinic at U.C. Berkeley found that charging juvenile administrative fees undermines rehabilitation and community safety, disproportionately impacts low-income families of color, and produces little to no net revenue. Prior to SB 190, 57 counties charged families juvenile administrative fees and most counties charged young people in adult court.

Today, 40 counties have voluntarily ended the collection of more than \$300 million in previously assessed juvenile fees, but 18 counties are pursuing approximately \$44 million in outstanding juvenile fees from the families of system-involved youth and an unknown amount of fees assessed to youth 21 and under in the adult system.



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Without the statewide protections afforded by SB 1290, ongoing juvenile fee collection efforts will continue to be a compounding injustice that disproportionately harms Black and Latinx families and low-income families. California must continue its role as a leader in the movement for youth justice across the county. With the passage of SB 1290, California will set the national standard for fee abolition that advances both rehabilitation and community safety.

Youth ALIVE! supports SB 1290 in its current form. We respectfully request that you vote “yes” on SB 1290.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne Marks", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Anne Marks
Executive Director

CC: Jessica Bartholow, Western Center on Law and Poverty (Co-Sponsor)
Anthony Robles, Youth Justice Coalition (Co-Sponsor)
Policy Advocacy Clinic, U.C. Berkeley School of Law