



PREVENTING VIOLENCE  
AND DEVELOPING  
YOUTH LEADERS

April 18, 2017

The Honorable Reginald Jones-Sawyer  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

YOUTH ALIVE!  
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**Re: AB 785 (The Disarm Hate Act) — SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, I write in support of Assembly Bill 785, your bill to keep firearms out of the hands of those who have been convicted of hate crimes. 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 on probation and/or 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.

We strongly support AB 785 because it will improve public safety by closing a gap in current California law that permits individuals convicted of misdemeanor hate crimes to possess and acquire firearms after their conviction. Under existing law, individuals convicted of violent misdemeanors and misdemeanors that involve the use or threatened use of a firearm, are generally prohibited from possessing or acquiring firearms for ten years after conviction, unless they successfully petition a court to restore their firearm eligibility. This same firearm prohibition should apply to those convicted of using force or a threat of force against a person because of the person's race, religion, national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

It is very disturbing that in recent years, hate crime have become more numerous and more vicious. Research shows that people who have committed violent crimes in the past are much more likely to commit subsequent acts of violence. Furthermore, those who have committed hate crimes tend to escalate their conduct so it is particularly important that hate-motivated criminals be disarmed.

Youth ALIVE! is in strong support of AB 785, which adds a ten-year firearm prohibition to a misdemeanor hate crime conviction. We thank you for your authorship of this important measure that will help keep the promise that California is safe and free for all.

Sincerely,

Anne Marks  
Executive Director

cc: State Senator Nancy Skinner – Fax: (916) 327-1997  
State Senator Benjamin Allen – Fax: (916) 651-4926  
State Senator Scott Wilk – Fax: (916) 651-4921  
State Senator Cathleen Galgiani – Fax: (916) 651-4905  
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