



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

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

March 4, 2019

The Honorable Shirley Weber
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3123
Sacramento, CA 95814

HONORARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL

HON. DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

EDWARD JAMES OLMOS
Actor

HON. BARBARA LEE
United States Representative

RE: AB 392 (Weber) — Support

Dear Assemblymember Weber:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE! and our constituency of youth and families personally impacted by violence, we are pleased to support your AB 392, which will protect community members by allowing law enforcement to use deadly force only when they have no other option for preventing imminent death or serious bodily injury. Youth ALIVE! is a national leader in addressing violence and Oakland's anchor organization for violence prevention, intervention and healing. We work directly with victims of shootings and train young leaders to create change. We support this bill because of the devastating impact of police violence on communities of color. In cities like ours experiencing high levels of crime, we need policies that build trust in, not suspicion of, police accountability.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALISA DEWYS
Consultant
Resources Global Professionals
San Francisco, CA

ANGELA JENKINS
Public Affairs Director
East Bay Area
Kaiser Permanente
Oakland, CA

CAITLIN LANG
Principal & Owner
Liquid Form Design
Oakland, CA

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

KRISTA REINHARD
Marketing Consultant
Oakland, CA

LA'BAN WADE II
Housing Coordinator
UC Berkeley
Berkeley, CA

STAN WEISNER, PH.D.
Director
Behavioral & Biological Sciences
UC Berkeley Extension
Berkeley, CA

California must update its outdated law on deadly use of force. Current law allows police to use deadly force whenever "reasonable", even if there is no threat to life or bodily security, and even if safe alternatives to deadly force are available. California law even authorizes deadly force that is below the standard of the Constitution. This disturbing level of discretion has had dire consequences: Police in California kill community members at a rate 37 percent higher than the national average, per capita, and several of our state's police departments have among the highest rates of killings in the country.

EMERITUS

HON. NANCY SKINNER
Senator
California State Legislature
Oakland, CA


In line with recommendations from policing and legal experts, including the California Attorney General, AB 392 updates California law so that police can use deadly force only when necessary to prevent death or serious injury, and requires them to use tactics to de-escalate a situation or use alternatives to deadly force when reasonable. Changing this standard will mean that officers will be trained to use deadly force less often and will be held accountable when they shoot and kill unnecessarily.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

The harm from police killings extends beyond the lives lost and impacts all involved. Police shootings cause extraordinary trauma for the families and communities impacted – trauma that disproportionately impacts communities of color. Studies show that police departments with more restrictive use of force policies not only have fewer shootings by police, but also lower rates of assaults against officers and lower crime rates. One of the Legislature's primary goals is to protect public safety, and safeguarding Californians' right to be safe from unnecessary deaths by law enforcement is a critical step in that direction. Youth ALIVE! strongly supports the enactment of AB 392.

Sincerely,


Anne Marks
Executive Director