



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

YOUTH ALIVE!
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March 26, 2021

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANNE MARKS
Executive Director
Youth ALIVE!
Oakland, CA

Re: Support for AB 1191 (McCarty)

Dear Assemblymember McCarty,

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, I write in strong support of your Assembly Bill 1191, which will mandate that California’s Department of Justice (CA DOJ) analyze crime gun data it already has, to determine trends and patterns related to how crime guns are sold and trafficked, and to provide annual firearms tracing reports to the California State Legislature.

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. Serving the families of homicide victims through our Khadafy Washington Project, and gunshot victims through our Caught in the Crossfire program, informs our support for AB 1191 as this bill would allow law enforcement to more easily identify the sources of crime guns to help us develop interventions to prevent illegal guns pouring into communities like Oakland.

If we are to reduce gun violence in California, a main focus must be on the upstream source of crime guns from irresponsible dealers who profit off of the sales of firearms that infiltrate communities across the state, and in particular, impacted communities of color. Most gun dealers in California sell guns responsibly, with every effort to comply with federal, state and local law; however, a small minority of gun dealers supply the criminal market: about 5% of gun dealers are responsible for about 90% of recovered crime guns nationwide. These gun dealers, most of whom sit outside of communities they affect the most, profit off of irresponsible or illegal sales, including knowingly selling to straw purchasers or gun traffickers, that drive guns into impacted communities.

The California DOJ’s Automated Firearms System (AFS) contains records of all assault weapons registered in California since 1989, all handguns purchased in California since 1996, all long-guns purchased in the state since 2014, and some other firearm related acquisition information dating back to 1917. The AFS also contains a database with information on all crime guns recovered in California.



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Because of California's unique firearms databases and systems, California can easily establish its own crime gun tracing program, independent and outside the restrictions set by federal law, allowing California to take meaningful and immediate action in reducing the effects of crime guns in its communities. However, there is currently no coordinated analysis on this available state level data, leaving an abundance of invaluable information unavailable and unanalyzed.

This bill will simply require the CA DOJ to analyze the information and data it already has on crime guns to determine and evaluate patterns and trends, and to create an annual firearms tracing report detailing which California licensed firearms dealers are responsible for selling crime guns. The mandate in this bill is small, but the impact will be life-saving.

For these reasons, Youth ALIVE! is proud to stand in strong support of AB 1191.

Sincerely,

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

Anne Marks
Executive Director