



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

YOUTH ALIVE!
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June 9, 2022

The Honorable Phil Ting
Assembly Member
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0019

Re: Support for AB 2417, The Youth Bill of Rights

Dear Assembly Member Ting:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, I write in support of Assembly Bill 2417, which would ensure that California youth who are incarcerated know their rights and are informed of the newly-established state ombudsperson office. This is needed because the state recently enacted SB 823, which will close the state Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in 2023 and shift the responsibility for incarceration to counties. When DJJ closes, the existing youth Bill of Rights will no longer be effective. As California transforms its youth justice system to handle youth at the county level, it is important to ensure that young people understand their rights and the protections they have when they are held in local custody.

Youth ALIVE! is a nationally recognized community-based organization known for initiating an international 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 youth impacted by the juvenile justice systems through our Pathways program, which helps young people chart and achieve positive goals, informs our support of AB 2417.

Assembly Bill 2417 will help young people to better understand their rights. It is written in language they can understand instead of using difficult legal terms. It will require the rights be posted in facilities and given to youth when they enter. Youth in foster care have long had a bill of rights (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 16001.9), and those in the Division of Juvenile Justice have had a bill of rights since 2007 (Welf. & Inst. Code, §224.71). This bill will ensure that youth in county facilities such as juvenile halls and camps have a similar statement of rights.

The language prescribed in AB 2417 has been reviewed by multiple groups of young people with system experience. They have provided important input to make this language as accessible as possible. Because of this, AB 2417 truly represents what young people believe is important for others in their position to know about legal rights and protections.

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This is a much-needed measure that will have an immediate impact in helping young people to believe that the law supports and protects them. If they should have problems in facilities, it will help them to voice their concerns and seek assistance. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne Marks".

Anne Marks
Executive Director