

[Motion to Support AB 912 – Strategic Anti-Violence Funding Efforts (SAFE) Act]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

Supplemental Information:

See attached document [Letter of Support]

1 April 3rd, 2023

2

3 The Honorable Reggie Jones-Sawyer
4 Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
5 1021 O Street, Room 5210
6 Sacramento, California 95814

7

8 **Re: Support for AB 912 (Jones-Sawyer) – Strategic Anti-Violence Funding Efforts**
9 **(SAFE) Act**

10

11 Dear Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer,

12

13 The Youth Commission of the City and County of San Francisco supports Assembly Bill (AB)
14 912, the SAFE Act, by Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer. This comprehensive measure
15 reinvests cost savings from predetermined prison closures into programs that reduce
16 violence, provide diversion opportunities, and deliver critical community support including
17 mental health, education, and vocational services.

18

19 The Youth Commission is composed of seventeen youths, between the ages of 12 to 23, who
20 represent the diverse communities of San Francisco. Created by the voters under a 1995
21 amendment to the City Charter, the Youth Commission advises the Board of Supervisors and
22 the Mayor of San Francisco on policies and laws related to young people. The Youth
23 Commission is also charged with providing comments and recommendations on all proposed
24 laws that primarily affect youth before the Board takes final action.

25

26 The Youth Commission, specifically the Transformative Justice Committee, has a
27 longstanding history of advocating for violence prevention and youth development programs.
28 The Committee continues collaborating alongside community organizations and City
29 departments to address the unmet needs of San Francisco youth that have been neglected
30 for far too long and provide a platform for youth voices at the decision-making table.

31

32 Thus, the Youth Commission supports AB 912 because, on December 6, 2022, the California
33 Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation announced the closure and exiting of the
34 contract for two additional prison facilities with the Legislative Analyst's Office estimating a
35 cost savings of \$235.3 million annually. Rather than returning to the General Fund, it is
36 imperative these savings are kept within the Legislature's crime prevention budget and
37 reinvested into effective strategies proven to further reduce crime and violence.

38

39 AB 912 [The SAFE Act] calls for the reallocation of the \$235 million in annual savings from
40 the proposed closure of two prisons in the 2023-24 state budget. Those funds will go to the
41 following programs:

42

- 1) \$50 million annually to relocate the Youth Reinvestment Grant Program from the Board of State and Community Corrections to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration. Grants are available for local jurisdictions and California tribes for trauma-informed diversion programs for minors.
- 2) \$35 million annually to the Department of Justice for the purpose of programs that reduce gang violence and gang involvement, modeled after successful programs like Ceasefire in Oakland that resulted in a 43% reduction in homicides and a 50% reduction in non-fatal shootings.
- 3) \$50 million annually to the State Department of Public Health, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to provide operational grants to School-based Health Centers and provide health and mental health services to children on school sites.
- 4) \$50 million annually to the California Health and Human Services Agency to support a pilot program for Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) in Alameda, Fresno, Merced, Tulane, Kern, and Los Angeles. This program supports early trauma-informed interventions for school-aged children experiencing extreme traumatic events in support of their health, well-being, and community stability.
- 5) \$50 million annually to the Department of Parks and Recreation in support of grants to local governments and community-based organizations to create new parks and fund recreation and health-based opportunities during peak times of violence.

The impact AB 912 would have on youth and preventative measures for youth and adult incarceration would be trailblazing and have a positive impact on generations to come.

For all the reasons previously stated, the Youth Commission is pleased to support the SAFE Act (AB 912, Jones-Sawyer), and we thank you for all your dedicated work on this issue.

Sincerely,

Emily Nguyen, Chair of San Francisco Youth Commission

Yoselin Colin, Chair of the Transformative Justice Committee

Adopted on 4/3/2023

2022-2023 San Francisco Youth Commission