



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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August 21, 2022

The Honorable Chris Holden
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5650
Sacramento, CA 95814

**ASSEMBLY BILL 2644 (HOLDEN)
SUPPORT, AS AMENDED**

Dear Assembly Member Holden:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office supports Assembly Bill 2644, as amended August 11, 2022.

AB 2644 prohibits an officer from using threats, physical harm, deception, or psychologically manipulative interrogation tactics when questioning a youth 25 years of age or younger about the commission of a felony or misdemeanor.

AB 2644 provides that this prohibition does not apply to interrogations where the officer reasonably believes the information sought is necessary to protect life or property from imminent harm and the questions were limited to those reasonably necessary to obtain information related to that imminent threat.

The reasoning behind the introduction of AB 2644 is illustrated by a body of research that indicates that adolescents are less capable of understanding their constitutional rights than their adult counterparts, and also that they are more prone to falsely confessing to a crime they did not commit.

Research suggests that "[b]ecause adolescents are more impulsive, are easily influenced by others (especially by figures of authority), are more sensitive to rewards (especially immediate rewards), and are less able to weigh in on the long-term consequences of their actions, they become more receptive to coercion." The context of custodial interrogation is believed to exacerbate these risks.

There are major differences in terms of maturity, knowledge, criminal sophistication, and life experiences between an adolescent and an adult. The research shows that juveniles are more prone to falsely confessing to crimes they commit in a custodial interrogation and therefore deserve additional protections.

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The amendments of August 11th limit the provisions of AB 2644 to juveniles which our Office supports because it provides additional protections from the possibility of false confessions for those individuals research has shown are in most need of the protections provided by AB 2644.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gascón", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney