



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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May 22, 2024  
Senator Aisha Wahab  
1021 O Street, Suite 7330  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Senate Bill 1353  
SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Wahab:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Senate Bill 1353 (Wahab).

The Youth Bill of Rights under Welfare and Institutions Code section 224.71 enumerates several rights for individuals confined in any juvenile facility within the State. This includes: the right to live in a safe, healthy, and clean environment; to receive medical and dental care; be free from various forms of abuse; to receive adequate and healthy meals, clean water, timely access to toilets, access to daily showers, sufficient personal hygiene items, clean bedding, and clean clothing in good repair; to receive a rigorous, quality education; and various other rights.

SB 1353 adds the right to not be deprived of mental health resources, including daily access to counselors, therapists, mentors, or any related services necessary for mental well-being, rehabilitation, and the promotion of positive youth development while detained in a juvenile facility.

A July 2020 policy statement published in *Pediatrics*, a publication from the American Academy of Pediatrics, estimates that between 50% to 80% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a mental health disorder. A 2017 review from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention concluded that, "having a mental health problem while involved in the system can increase youths' likelihood of recidivating or engaging in other problem behavior."

The primary purpose of the juvenile justice system is the successful rehabilitation of minors. SB 1353 recognizes that taking mental health issues seriously and treating them must be a part of that rehabilitative process.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tamar Tokat in our Legislative Office at 916-442-0668.

Very Truly Yours,

GEORGE GASCÓN  
District Attorney