

March 28, 2023

The Honorable Brian Maienschein
State Assembly
1021 O St., Suite 8320
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: Support - AB 456 (Maienschein)

Dear Assembly Member Maienschein:

The California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) is pleased to Support AB 456 (Maienschein), which would require California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCC) campuses and request University of California (UC) campuses to establish a campus mental health hotline.

The California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) is a youth-led statewide network comprised of TAY Action Teams and CAYEN Board members which engages, empowers and represents Transitional Age Youth (TAY), ages 15-26, in mental health advocacy on issues that directly affect TAY. Since CAYEN's inception in 2006, CAYEN has taken many forms of action to empower TAY in their personal lives and spark progressive change in public policy.

CAYEN members know firsthand how providing mental health services and supports, both on and off campus improves student success and student behavioral health. Between 2018 and 2020 the suicide rate for youth ages 15-24 in California was 8.7 per 100,000. We must do everything we can to reduce these startling statistics. While many campuses already provide mental health services and supports, some campuses do not provide mental health services, leaving many students without a support system during a time of crisis.

Assembly Bill 456 works close the equity gap, ensuring every student will have access to mental health supports in a time of crisis. We believe that this bill empowers our Transitional Age Youth to better live their lives and promote a community of self-care.

For these reasons, we SUPPORT AB 456. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at dthirakul@mhac.org, or our Interim Director of Public Policy, Karen Vicari at kvicari@mhacofca.org.

In Community,

Danny Thirakul
Public Policy Coordinator
California Youth Empowerment Network