



March 29, 2023

The Honorable James Ramos
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0045
Tel: (916) 319-2045

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 461 (Ramos)

Dear Assembly Member Ramos:

The California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) is pleased to support Assembly Bill 461 (Ramos), which would request the Regents of the University of California and require the governing board of each community college district and the Trustees of the California State University to provide information about the use and location of fentanyl test strips as part of established campus orientations, notify students of the presence and location of fentanyl test strips, and require that each campus health center stock and distribute fentanyl test strips.

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.

The increasing rate of Fentanyl overdose and poisoning among youth requires substantial investments in prevention, outreach, and engagement from community-based organizations. Accessibility to local resources and services can decrease the likelihood of an overdose or poisoning from occurring. Assembly Bill 461 focuses on outreach and engagement on local colleges campuses informing the existence of fentanyl testing strips and requiring campuses to supply them through their campus health centers. In addition, the ready availability of fentanyl test strips on college campuses will save the lives of students who innocently buy medications or substances that have been poisoned with fentanyl.

For these reasons, we SUPPORT Assembly Bill 461. 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Thirakul', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Danny Thirakul
Public Policy Coordinator
California Youth Empowerment Network