



March 29, 2023

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
State Senate
1021 O St., Suite 6720
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Senate Bill 11 (Menjivar)

Dear Senator Menjivar,

The California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) is pleased to support Senate Bill 11, which would place certain restrictions on the contracting out of mental health services provided by the California State University (CSU) system, as well as require oversight of the mental health services provided to students. This bill would also require the CSU to hire additional full-time, permanent mental health counselors to address increased student needs and work to create a pipeline for CSU students to become mental health professionals.

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.

TAY using community-based resources deserve the highest quality of mental health services and supports. College campuses often provide these services through a third party which has the potential to impact the quality of care. Campuses that contract services out are not able to directly address complaints, specialized training, or diversification of staff. This bill looks to hold campuses accountable and increases the quality of care while also providing a career pathway for TAY to become mental health professionals. Additionally, SB 11 will significantly increase access to much-needed mental health services on CSU campuses by increasing the provider to student ratio.

For these reasons, we support Senate Bill 11. 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