

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 235

Introduced by Assembly Member Kuehl
(Coauthor: Senator Johnston)

January 28, 1999

An act to add Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 2050) to Division 2.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to youth.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 235, as introduced, Kuehl. California Youth Violence Prevention Authority.

Under existing law, all state agencies are required to cooperate with the Department of the Youth Authority in order to bring about a statewide program for reduction and prevention of crime and delinquency. Existing law requires the State Commission on Juvenile Justice, Crime and Delinquency Prevention to advise the Director of the Youth Authority on matters relating to crime and delinquency prevention.

This bill would create the California Youth Violence Prevention Authority within the office of the Attorney General. The authority would be given duties and responsibilities related to the prevention of youth violence, including the production of a statewide plan for the augmentation, allocation, and coordination of youth violence prevention programs and resources, for presentation to the Legislature by January 1, 2001, to be known as the California Youth Violence Prevention and Coordination Plan. The duties

and responsibilities of the authority would include administering a violence prevention grant program with available funds, as specified. The bill would provide for an advisory committee, as specified, to assist the authority, and would also create the state Violence Prevention Fund in the State Treasury. This bill would specify that funding for the authority shall be provided in the Budget Act of 2000, as specified.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 3 (commencing with Section
2 2050) is added to Division 2.5 of the Welfare and
3 Institutions Code, to read:

4

5 CHAPTER 3. CALIFORNIA YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION
6 ACT

7

8 2050. This chapter shall be known and may be cited
9 as the California Youth Violence Prevention Act.

10 2051. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
11 following:

12 (a) Violence is a leading cause of injury and death
13 among young Californians, and it must be recognized as
14 a major public health concern.

15 (b) California must take steps to prevent shootings
16 and other senseless acts of violence committed by
17 children experiencing anger, distress, or other problems.

18 (c) Despite recent declines in the rate of arrests of
19 juveniles for crimes of violence, statewide victimization
20 and arrest rates of juveniles and young adults for acts
21 involving violence remain unacceptably high.

22 (d) The resources and responses of the California
23 juvenile and criminal justice systems are inadequate to
24 control and prevent violence at its developmental stages
25 among children, youth, and families.

26 (e) California has no comprehensive youth violence
27 prevention plan or strategy.



1 (f) State-funded violence prevention programs are
2 scattered among 10 or more state agencies without
3 adequate coordination of effort. Both the Little Hoover
4 Commission and the Task Force to Review Juvenile
5 Crime and the Juvenile Justice Response have
6 recommended that youth crime and violence prevention
7 programs be consolidated for greater effectiveness
8 within a single state agency.

9 (g) The California Attorney General has determined
10 that the long-term health of our society depends on a new
11 approach to community-building, with an increased
12 emphasis on prevention, community involvement, and
13 collaboration.

14 (h) Local communities need assistance, including
15 economic assistance, to implement effective strategies
16 and programs for the prevention of violence among
17 youth.

18 (i) Model, innovative, and successful violence
19 prevention programs must be identified, implemented,
20 and evaluated in California.

21 (j) State leadership and improved public agency
22 collaboration are needed to assist citizens, communities,
23 and local governments in their efforts to prevent youth
24 violence.

25 2052. (a) The California Youth Violence Prevention
26 Authority is hereby created within the office of the
27 Attorney General.

28 (b) The duties and responsibilities of the authority
29 shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

30 (1) Providing statewide leadership and coordinating
31 state and local efforts to prevent violence among youth.

32 (2) Assisting local communities, cities, and counties in
33 their efforts to implement effective programs and
34 strategies for the prevention of youth violence.

35 (3) Seeking, receiving, and administering grants and
36 funds from public and private sources for violence
37 prevention efforts and programs.

38 (4) Providing public education on effective programs,
39 models, and strategies for the control of violence and
40 serving as a clearinghouse for information on youth



1 violence prevention issues, programs, resources, and
2 research.

3 (5) Providing training and technical assistance to help
4 build the capacity of organizations, communities, and
5 local government to develop, implement, and evaluate
6 violence prevention programs.

7 (6) Promoting and advocating at all levels of
8 government effective community programs and
9 responses, supported by adequate resources, for the
10 prevention of violence among children, youth, and
11 families in California.

12 2053. (a) The authority shall produce a statewide
13 plan for the augmentation, allocation, and coordination of
14 youth violence prevention programs and resources. The
15 plan shall be developed with the cooperation and
16 approval of the advisory board described in Section 2054
17 and shall be known as the California Youth Violence
18 Prevention and Coordination Plan. The plan shall include
19 recommendations for the coordination or consolidation of
20 violence prevention funds and programs which are
21 presently administered by different state agencies. The
22 plan shall also include recommendations for the
23 augmentation, implementation, and evaluation of
24 state-funded youth violence prevention programs. The
25 plan shall also address other factors related to the
26 problem of youth violence in California, including, but
27 not limited to, the following:

28 (1) Recent state and national research on the
29 effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of violence
30 prevention programs and strategies being implemented
31 in California and in other states.

32 (2) The relationship of projected growth in
33 California's youth population to the need for additional
34 youth violence prevention resources and programs.

35 (3) The need for a stable and continuing source of
36 funds to maintain a state and local network of effective
37 youth violence prevention programs and strategies.

38 (4) Firearm control policies and their relationship to
39 youth violence.



1 (5) The problem of violence committed by children in
2 school settings and proposed solutions.

3 (b) The authority shall return its completed youth
4 violence prevention and coordination plan to the
5 Legislature by January 1, 2001.

6 2054. (a) The authority shall have an advisory board
7 which shall meet periodically, but not less than once per
8 quarter, to carry out the following duties:

9 (1) Provide guidance and make recommendations
10 regarding the operations, priorities, and policies of the
11 office.

12 (2) Provide input and approve recommendations for
13 the statewide youth violence prevention and
14 coordination plan described in Section 2053.

15 (3) Provide statewide leadership by drawing the
16 attention of citizens and policymakers to the need for
17 improved coordination of violence prevention programs
18 and to the need for adequate resources supporting
19 effective and well-deployed programs for the prevention
20 of youth violence in California.

21 (b) The advisory board shall include the Attorney
22 General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the
23 Director of the Department of the Youth Authority, the
24 Director of the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, and
25 the Director of the Department of Health Services. The
26 advisory board shall also include eight public members.
27 Four of the public members shall be appointed by the
28 Governor and shall include a local law enforcement
29 officer, a chief probation officer, an advocate or
30 individual representing the victims of violent crime, and
31 a representative of a school or school district or county
32 office of education that has implemented a school-based
33 violence prevention program. The other four public
34 members shall be appointed by the Attorney General and
35 shall include a representative of a community-based
36 agency specializing in youth violence prevention
37 services, a criminologist or justice system expert having
38 specialized knowledge in the field of violence prevention,
39 a medical or mental health professional experienced in
40 serving juvenile offenders, and a youth member who shall



1 be a person under the age of 25 years having relevant
2 experience in programs or activities related to the
3 prevention of violence.

4 2055. The State Violence Prevention Fund is hereby
5 created in the State Treasury. Funds received from
6 private, state, or federal sources for violence prevention
7 purposes may be deposited into the fund. Upon
8 appropriation therefor by the Legislature, these funds
9 shall be used by the California Youth Violence Prevention
10 Authority to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

11 SEC. 2. Funding to implement the purposes,
12 objectives, and operations of the California Youth
13 Violence Prevention Authority shall be provided from an
14 amount appropriated to the office of the Attorney
15 General in the Budget Act of 2000.

