

AB 2417

Youth Bill of Rights

Assemblymember
Phil Ting
19TH DISTRICT



SUMMARY

Everyone deserves basic human rights. AB 2417 creates a Youth Bill of Rights for incarcerated youth so that youth know their rights, and have easier access to that information.

BACKGROUND

The state legislature passed SB 823 mandating the closure of state youth prisons, the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Starting in 2023, all youth who are incarcerated will be held in county facilities.

Under current law, there is a "Youth Bill of Rights" for youth incarcerated at DJJ; however, there is not anything similar for youth incarcerated at the local level. Consequently, once DJJ closes, the Youth Bill of Rights will no longer exist.

A Bill of Rights is an essential step to treating our youth with dignity and respect. Youth who are incarcerated deserve to know their rights. AB 2417 provides information to youth about their rights in existing state and federal law.

In 2020, the legislature created a new state office for youth justice, the Office of Youth and Community Restoration, with an ombudsperson for youth incarcerated at the county level. AB 2417 makes sure youth across the state know how to reach the ombudsperson if something is wrong.

Most importantly, as the state moves to a wholly locally-based youth justice system, AB 2417 creates equity across all juvenile justice facilities in the state, establishing a

uniform requirement for notifying youth of their rights.

Being incarcerated as a young person is very difficult. It exacerbates existing trauma, and separation from family, teachers, and other adults in the community can make a youth feel despairingly alone. The simple act of providing a youth a list of their rights and a number for the ombudsman can convey that they are not alone, and they will get the care they deserve.

THIS BILL

AB 2417 provides incarcerated youth with an understanding of their basic human rights that already exist in law. It ensures they are provided a document with those rights, and that a list of the rights are posted at each facility.

SUPPORT

Anti-Recidivism Coalition (Co-Sponsor)
California Youth Connection (Co-Sponsor)
Equity California (Co-Sponsor)
Human Rights Watch (Co-Sponsor)
National Center for Youth Law (Co-Sponsor)
Pacific Juvenile Defender Center (Co-Sponsor)
W. Haywood Burns Institute (Co-Sponsor)
Young Women's Freedom Center (Co-Sponsor)
California Public Defenders Association

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