



OFFICERS

President

Chuck Washington
Riverside County

1st Vice President

Bruce Gibson
San Luis Obispo County

2nd Vice President

Jeff Griffiths
Inyo County

Past President

Ed Valenzuela
Siskiyou County



CEO

Graham Knaus

March 9, 2023

The Honorable Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer Sr.
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 479 (Rubio, B.) – Alternative domestic violence program
As introduced February 7, 2023 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing March 14, 2023 – Assembly Public Safety Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 of the state's counties, writes in support of Assembly Bill 479, which will further develop batterer intervention systems to address the underlying criminogenic needs of those who engage in domestic violence.

For years domestic violence (DV) programs have remained in a stagnant place. Unchanged from inception, and in many cases, lacking clear evidence as to what works in reducing intimate partner violence for those people convicted of DV and mandated to treatment.

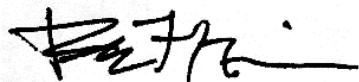
In the early 1990s, California established a mandatory 52-week domestic violence batterer intervention program for persons convicted and placed on probation for DV. A 2008 study by the Judicial Council of California found a wide variety of practices, programs, and systems with several complicating socio-economic factors, between and within counties. These factors lead to low program engagement rates, unmet criminogenic needs, and ultimately, high levels of recidivism as measured by new arrests. The study also found substance abuse confounded DV programming involvement, as well as the ability to pay impacting completion rates.

In 2017, former Assembly Member Mark Stone authored AB 372 to help advance DV batterer intervention programs. CSAC co-sponsored this legislation, which authorized six counties (Napa, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, and Yolo) to pilot alternative interventions, focusing on creating opportunities for change to prevent future incidents of DV.

AB 372 (2018) required that alternative programs meet specific conditions, including that the pilot counties perform risk and needs assessments and that programs include components that are evidence-based or promising practices, as defined in the legislation. Following the bill being signed into law, CSAC created the Initiative on Improving Domestic Violence Programs and Systems. This initiative began with local county collaboration on the development and future implementation of legislation. This included convening various strategy meetings with the pilot counties, in addition to working on the development of a new DV analytical tool created to help counties determine the efficacy of alternate interventions. Collaboration and data-synthetization continues to this day. Thus, extension of the pilot program will allow for a fully planned evaluation and more robust policy discussions to best inform local and state practices that result in true system transformation.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 479. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 650-8129 or rmorimune@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Morimune". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ryan Morimune
Legislative Advocate

Cc: The Honorable Blanca Rubio, California State Assembly
Members and Consultants, Assembly Public Safety Committee