



## AB 60 (BRYAN) VICTIMS'/SURVIVORS' RIGHT TO BE INFORMED OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

### SUMMARY:

AB 60 will require that victims/survivors of harm receive notice of the availability of community-based Restorative Justice programs and processes in their community, county, county jails, juvenile detention facilities, and prisons. AB 60 will give victims and survivors the statutory right to be notified of the availability of Restorative Justice processes.

### SOLUTION

Our coalition plans to use AB 60 to amend the Victim Protection and Resources Card, included within the “Marsy’s Rights” card, to notify victims/survivors of the availability of Restorative Justice processes. The “Marsy’s Rights” card already contains resources on restitution, victim witness assistance centers, and the criminal legal process. Thus, including information on the availability of Restorative Justice programs, will be a simple and impactful addition aligned with the current purpose of the Card. This proposal will impose no additional burden to local law enforcement agencies and does not require budgetary allocations.

-----

*“I feel like I got closure. I was able to know how the incident affected me as much as other people. I would recommend the restorative process to another person who has been a victim of a crime because although what we went through was hard, sometimes talking about it can help us to feel more at ease and move on.” – Victim of Crime, Restorative Justice Participant in Long Beach, CA*

### BACKGROUND:

Restorative Justice is a practice and theory rooted in indigenous traditions. When put into practice, Restorative Justice is a community-based, non-punitive set of processes that center the needs of people who have been harmed. Restorative Justice encourages accountability, healing, and repair. These processes can include facilitated meetings between the person who was harmed and the person who harmed them, along with family members and community members. During the meeting, the parties discuss the harm, including the causes and impacts.

Restorative Justice processes often result in a deep understanding of the harm caused, meaningful expressions of accountability, and agreements to take specific actions that both repair harm and prevent future harm. These actions are unique to each situation and can include personal or community service, engagement in employment or counseling, and payment of restitution. Restorative Justice processes also provide an opportunity for victims/survivors and their loved ones to ask questions, share about the impact of the harm, and engage in dialogue in ways that are not possible within the traditional criminal legal system

In California, Restorative Justice is already practiced pre-charge through referrals from District

Attorneys and law enforcement, post-conviction via requests from harmed parties to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and in the community by non-profits, such as the Ahimsa Collective and Centinela Youth Services. Additionally, it is practiced in schools from Oakland to Los Angeles.

A 2015 peer-reviewed study in *The Journal of Experimental Criminology* found that Restorative Justice processes can result in reduced feelings of fear, anger, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and depression for people who have been harmed. Researchers Mark Umbreit et al., studied the impact of Restorative Justice Conferencing across different countries, and found that Restorative Justice processes result in higher rates of satisfaction for people who have been harmed than the current criminal legal system. Only 14% of victims/survivors surveyed in California by Californians for Safety and Justice in 2019 reported feeling “very supported” by the criminal legal system after their experience of crime. A study of Community Works’ Restorative Community Conferencing program in Alameda County in 2015 demonstrated that Restorative Justice processes also reduce future acts of harm and violence. Expanding awareness about the availability and benefits of Restorative Justice processes is crucial to satisfy the unmet emotional and psychological needs of victims/survivors of crime.

*“I learned the importance of empathy in a more detailed way that I had never thought of, and how people who are victim(s) don’t just get over it.” –  
Person Who Caused Harm, Restorative Justice  
Participant from Santa Cruz, CA.*

## **ABOUT OUR COALITION**

The California Restorative Justice Policy Coalition is a coalition of 30 community-based organizations and advocates in California that either practice Restorative

Justice in the community and/or are committed to expanding non-carceral approaches to harm in the State of California. The coalition and this proposal arose out of a collaboration between Community Works, the Restorative Justice Project at Impact Justice, and other Restorative Justice organizations in California. Community Works has over 25 years of experience implementing pre-charge restorative justice programs in the Bay Area in partnership with District Attorney’s Offices in San Francisco and Alameda County. The Restorative Justice Project at Impact Justice is dedicated to expanding restorative justice diversion programs across the country.

## **SPONSORS**

Alliance for Boys and Men of Color  
Californians for Safety and Justice  
Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice  
Centinela Youth Services  
Community Works West  
Impact Justice  
Initiate Justice  
Insight Prison Project, A Division of Five Keys  
Schools & Programs

## **SUPPORTERS**

American Friends Service Committee  
Pangea Legal Services  
The Collective Healing and Transformation Project  
RYSE Youth Center

## **COALITION CONTACT INFO**

Danica Rodarmel, [danica@wholeconsulting.org](mailto:danica@wholeconsulting.org)