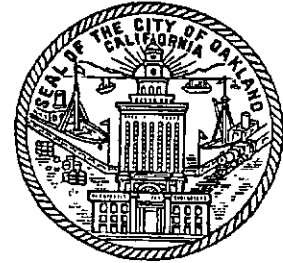


14 APR 11 AM 9:38

CITY OF OAKLAND
BILL ANALYSIS



Date: April 24, 2014

Bill Number: AB 1629(Counseling Services For Victims Of Violent Crime)

Bill Author: Assemblymember Rob Bonta

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Contact: Clara Garzon/Casey Farmer

Department: Offices of Councilmembers Gallo and Gibson McElhaney

Telephone: 510-238-7051/ 510-238-7031

RECOMMENDED POSITION: SUPPORT

Summary of the Bill:

Under California's Victims Compensation Fund (VCF) Program, AB 1629 would provide reimbursement for a crime victim or derivative victim for the amount of outpatient violence peer counseling-related expenses incurred by the victim or derivative victim, thereby providing equal access to services for all victims of violent crime. This reimbursement is a first step to curbing community violence and supporting victims. AB 1629 will support violence prevention efforts, helping target populations receiving the benefit offered by victim's compensation programs.

Background:

In 1965, California established the nation's first Victim Compensation Program, CalVCP to provide compensation for victims of violent crimes; eligible victims may be reimbursed for many crime-related expenses, including crime scene clean-up, relocation, lost income, burial expenses, home security, medical treatment, domestic violence and rape peer counseling, and mental health services. Current law does not provide for reimbursements for trained peer counselors supporting injured victims of violent crimes other than domestic and sexual assault.

Positive Factors for Oakland:

The city of Oakland is home to many victims support organizations who work collaboratively with hospitals to provide peer counseling services by trained individuals, which have been proven successful in decreasing retaliations and re-victimization among the populations they serve. AB 1629 would provide programs or services to victims of violent crime and their families, and other programs, regardless of whether a similar program exists in an agency that provides additional services. AB 1629 would provide Oakland community organizations incentives to offer these cost-effective best practice services to promote healing and reduce re-victimization.

Item: _____
Rules & Legislation Comte.
April 24, 2014

Negative Factors for Oakland: None.

PLEASE RATE THE EFFECT OF THIS MEASURE ON THE CITY OF OAKLAND:

- Critical** (top priority for City lobbyist, city position required ASAP) –
 Very Important (priority for City lobbyist, city position necessary)
 Somewhat Important (City position desirable if time and resources are available)
 Minimal or **None** (do not review with City Council, position not required)

Known support:

Youth ALIVE!

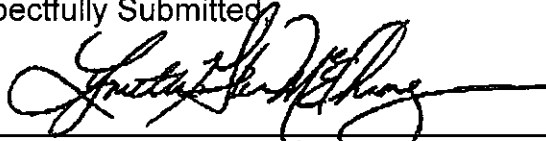
Known Opposition:

None.

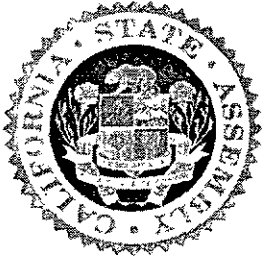


Noel Gallo
Councilmember - District 5

Respectfully Submitted



Lynette Gibson McElhaney
Councilmember – District 3



AB 1629 – Assemblymember Rob Bonta COUNSELING SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME

Bill Summary

AB 1629 extends peer counseling services and reimbursement under the Victims Compensation Fund (VCF) to victims of all violent crimes.

Background

In 1965, California established the nation's first Victim Compensation Program, CalVCP. CalVCP provides compensation for victims of violent crimes; eligible victims may be reimbursed for many crime-related expenses, including crime scene clean-up, relocation, lost income, burial expenses, home security, medical treatment, domestic violence and rape peer counseling, and mental health services.

The fund is administered by the Victim's Compensation Governing Board (board), which assumed responsibility for the program in 1967 and has since expanded its role to also include managing government claims and revenue recovery. The fund is supported through restitution fines and orders, penalty assessments levied on persons convicted of crimes and traffic offenses, and federal VOCA grants.

Issue

Current law does not provide for reimbursements for trained peer counselors supporting injured victims of violent crimes other than domestic and sexual assault. Since 2004, several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of hospital-linked

peer counseling for injured victims of violent crimes, such as shootings and stabbings. Without reimbursement through CalVCP, community organizations have no incentive to offer these cost-effective best practice services to promote healing and reduce re-victimization.

How AB 1629 Fixes the Problem

AB 1629 would provide reimbursement for a crime victim or derivative victim for the amount of outpatient violence peer counseling-related expenses incurred, thereby providing equal access to services for all victims of all violent crime.

Setting up a pay-for-service reimbursement for "Violence Intervention Specialists" would accomplish two things: (1) Allow more organizations to offer intervention specialist services and (2) Increase the number of victims receiving benefits, as awareness among victims about the services also increases.

AB 1629 will support violence prevention efforts, helping target populations receive the benefits offered by victim's compensation programs. Many victims of gun violence return to the same violent environment they were traumatized as victims, without the appropriate support they need to stay safe physically and emotionally. AB 1629 removes a statutory barrier to achieving that goal.

Support

Youth ALIVE! (sponsor)

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

14 APR 10 PM 3:23 OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Resolution No. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER LYNETTE GIBSON MCELHANEY
AND COUNCILMEMBER NOEL GALLO

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 1629
(BONTA) WHICH EXTENDS PEER COUNSELING SERVICES AND
REIMBURSEMENT UNDER THE VICTIMS COMPENSATION UNDER
THE VICTIMS COMPENSATION FUND (VCF) TO VICTIMS OF ALL
VIOLENT CRIMES.**

WHEREAS, Since its inception in 1965, the California Victims Compensation Fund has been a national leader in providing victims with support for losses or trauma suffered as a result of violent crime, including financial assistance for specified issues, such as medical recovery, on-going mental health services, or burial costs; and

WHEREAS, due to the high levels of violent crime in the City of Oakland, our city is home to many victims who have survived violent crimes; and

WHEREAS, in 2013 alone, there were 90 murders, 469 assaults with a firearm, 592 additional firearm shootings and offenses, and 168 rapes in the City of Oakland, thus the number of victims of violent crimes grew by 1,319 individuals; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland is home to many victims support organizations who work collaboratively with hospitals to provide peer counseling services by trained individuals, which have been proven successful in decreasing retaliations and re-victimization among the populations they serve; and

WHEREAS, current, the Victims Compensation Fund only allows victims of rape to be reimbursed for peer counseling services and does not allow victims of violent crimes, such as stabbings or shootings, to access this type of peer counseling service; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 1629 creates a new classification of counselors called "Violence Intervention Specialists," who can offer reimbursable peer counseling services to victims, through the California Victims Compensation Fund; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 1629 will promote healing and reduce re-victimization by including trained peer counselors among the options of service providers that victims have to choose from when seeking healing for emotional stress related to the violent crime they have survived; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 1629 was introduced by Assemblymember Rob Bonta on February 10, 2014 and passed unanimously out of the Public Safety Committee on March 26, 2014; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Oakland City Council endorses AB 1629.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, SCHAAF, AND PRESIDENT KERNIGHAN

NOES -
ABSENT -
ABSTENTION -

ATTEST:

LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California