



**LEGISLATION &
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**
1831 K Street
Sacramento, CA 95811-4114
Tel: (916) 504-5800
TTY: (800) 719-5798
Intake Line: (800) 776-5746
Fax: (916) 504-5807
www.disabilityrightsca.org

September 3, 2020

Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1506 (McCarty) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 1506 and requests your signature.**

This bill requires the California Attorney General to investigate incidents of an officer-involved shooting resulting in the death of an unarmed civilian. It also authorizes the state prosecutor to prepare a written report, and would require the state prosecutor to post any reports made on a public internet website.

Data shows that persons with disabilities, particularly those with mental impairments, are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. The data also shows that police in California killed, in the line of duty, more than 610 people in California in the five-year period between 2009 and 2014. In Los Angeles County, since the year 2000 nearly 900 people, (80% of whom were Black and Brown persons) have died at the hands of law enforcement. Since the year 2000 only two officers were charged as the result of the shooting of a civilian while on duty. In virtually all of the cases, the Los Angeles County District Attorney deemed the use

of force resulting in the death of the civilian legally justified. In a much smaller county, Solano County, the Vallejo Police Department (alone) has killed 19 people since 2010. In 2012, Vallejo officers fatally shot 6 people. Vallejo is a small city of 122,000 people. No Vallejo police officer has been charged for an on duty shooting or use of force causing the death of a civilian. Some of the Vallejo officers killed again, even before the Solano County District Attorney had decided about prosecution in the first killing. Nevertheless, the Solano County District Attorney has found that all the deaths of civilians at the hands of Vallejo officers since 2010 were legally justified.

The District Attorney and the law enforcement officers in any given county must work hand in hand to investigate and prosecute crime. Many District Attorneys rely on the endorsements and financial support of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and Police Officer Associations for their elections. Given this interdependence, relying on the local District Attorney to complete a transparent, reliable and truly independent investigation undermines trust in the entire justice system.

AB 1506 would be a significant step towards ensuring California's citizens that the investigations of these many deaths are more likely to be independent, fair and just. If the investigations were to be automatic and not limited to the request of a law enforcement agency, this assurance would be even stronger. This bill would serve to better protect persons with disabilities in the criminal justice system and particularly those of color that intersects with their disability.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill and requests your signature. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Kevin McCarty, California State Assembly
Cristina Salazar, Legislative Director, Office of Assembly Member
McCarty
Jessica Devencenzi, Legislative Secretary, Office of Legislative
Affairs
Mitchell Rosenberg, Legislative Assistant, Office of Legislative Affairs