

July 8, 2020

The Honorable Bill Dodd
Chair, Senate Committee on Governmental Organization
1020 N Street, Room 584
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2054 (Kamlager) C.R.I.S.E.S. Act - SUPPORT

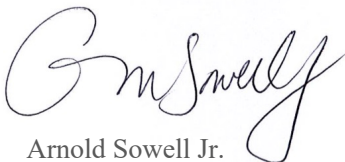
Dear Chair Dodd,

NextGen California strongly supports AB 2054 (Kamlager). This bill requires the Office of Emergency Services to develop a pilot program that will provide grants to jurisdictions that integrate the participation and deployment of community organizations as part of the emergency response protocol in situations involving vulnerable populations. These community organization staff members would be trained peer support experts, mental health providers, and crisis counselors.

All too often, vulnerable populations – young people of color, people with disabilities, people who are gender nonconforming, people who are formerly incarcerated, people with immigration status issues – disproportionately face life threatening encounters when engaged with law enforcement because of deep rooted fears and stigmas. Rather than dispatching law enforcement, AB 2054 would pilot a program that deploys trained professionals from community organizations with a core competency of working with and a track record of service to vulnerable populations in certain circumstances. The deployment of these trained community personnel to respond to certain emergencies would help de-escalate and diffuse tense situations, lead to better outcomes and community relations, and present a cost savings.

NextGen California supports progressive policies and programs that advance the safety and prosperity of all communities, but particularly those that have been historically marginalized and disadvantaged. For the above reasons we respectfully request your “aye” vote on AB 2054.

Sincerely,



Arnold Sowell Jr.
Executive Director, NextGen California