



September 14, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2112 (Ramos) Suicide Prevention

[Request for Signature](#)

Dear Governor Newsom:

NextGen California is pleased to support AB 2112 (Ramos) and ask that you sign this measure into law. This bill creates a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention within the Department of Public Health to study and address the crisis of suicide.

Over the last several years, suicide rates among the various demographic groups have increased dramatically and these numbers were increasing long before COVID-19. The isolation, fear, despair, and uncertainty and overall detrimental impact to social interactions caused by the pandemic, along with its accompanying financial and housing insecurity, has only served to exacerbate the mental health crisis of suicide.

State government has a responsibility to respond to this mental health crisis by providing resources to address underlying conditions and ensure that these conditions do not worsen in the coming months and years.

Currently, there exists a patchwork of state and local suicide prevention resources and programs. Between schools, cities, county Departments of Behavioral Health and the state, a variety of practices and programs are utilized to support suicide prevention efforts. This presents an important problem: no one institution can identify best practices and dispense recommendations that serve both the state and local agencies.

AB 2112 takes a vital step in addressing the crisis of suicide by coordinating state resources into a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention. This Office will devote resources to studying this crisis, make recommendations to the legislature, and advise on best practices to ensure that statewide resources are used to properly affect the crisis. By creating a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention, the state can target specific populations with greatest suicide risk to begin to address the root causes of the crisis.



NextGen California has long supported policies and programs that improve access to healthcare and mental health treatment and services. For the above reasons, we respectfully request your signature on AB 2112.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arnold Sowell Jr." in a cursive style.

Arnold Sowell Jr.

Executive Director, NextGen California