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Law and Legislative Committee
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Support of AB 2737 (Waters) Related to Youth Centers

SUMMARY

The Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988, AB 2737 (Waters), provides for a \$300 million general obligation bond for acquisition, construction, renovation of, and purchase of equipment for, youth centers and shelters. This report recommends that the Law and Legislative Committee endorse staff's support of this bill.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Authored by Assembly Member Maxine Waters, AB 2737, authorizes \$300 million in bonds, \$250 million for multipurpose youth centers and \$50 million for youth shelters for runaway children. If passed by the legislature, this bond issue will be placed on the November 1988 ballot.

There are approximately 5.7 million young people between the ages of 5 and 17 in California, with an estimated one out of every five living below the poverty level. The 1980 census shows 48,994 children in the same age brackets within the City of Sacramento and reports 14,645 children, or 29 percent, living below the poverty level.

The Department of Parks and Community Services provides ten community centers which offer a variety of youth programs primarily focusing on sports, recreation, and cultural activities. These centers are also utilized for youth employment training and educational programs on topics ranging from basic skills and self-improvement to drug and alcohol abuse prevention. Approximately 117,500 teens participated in the Department's baseline (non fee-based) services in FY 1987-88 while over 540,000 citizens attended programs at the community centers, with approximately a third of those participants being children and youth. The success of youth centers in providing alternatives to

meet the needs of children and teens has recently been documented in a 1986 national Harris poll (Exhibit A), which showed that three out of four alumni of Boys Clubs said their experiences with the Club helped them avoid trouble with the law, and seven out of ten said it helped them avoid drug and alcohol problems.

Funds made available through the Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988 are to be distributed on the basis of population and demonstrated need as well as provision of innovative nontraditional programs aimed toward the youth of the targeted community. A 15 percent local match, either cash or in-kind, will be required for any grants received under this program. This measure is modeled on the Senior Citizens Service Center Bond Act of 1984, a program which has provided the City with \$450,000 for expansion of the Senior Citizens' Center at 27th and J Streets.

Staff recommends that a letter of support be sent to Assembly Member Waters (Exhibit B).

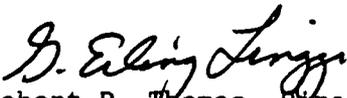
FINANCIAL DATA

Support of this legislation will have no immediate financial impact; however, should the Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988 be passed by the voters in November, the City of Sacramento will be eligible for a substantial grant.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Law and Legislative Committee endorse staff's support of AB 2737 (Waters), the Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988.

Respectfully submitted,

for 
Robert P. Thomas, Director
Parks and Community Services

All Districts
April 28, 1988

AB 2737 - ASSEMBLYWOMAN MAXINE WATERS

HARRIS POLL AFFIRMS SUCCESS OF YOUTH PROGRAMS

In 1986 a Harris Poll was conducted of a national representative sample of Boys Club alumni of all ages and from all parts of the country. Some 41,000 men were contacted of whom 1,202 were interviewed for the survey.

This survey is the first of its kind ever done by a major voluntary organization in the United States. The findings of the survey, statistically projectable to the entire adult male populations of the United States, indicate that approximately 3.4 million men alive today were members of Boys Clubs during their youth. These results have strong policy implications for dealing with today's youth.

The Boys Clubs and Boys and Girls Clubs are neighborhood agencies dedicated to helping today's young people "beat the streets". Over half of the young people in the programs come from minority families, families with annual incomes under \$12,000 and families of four or more children. Nearly half are from households headed by single parents.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE STREETS

Three out of four alumni report that their Boys Club experience helped them avoid difficulty with the law.

"Keeping me out of trouble," or words to that effect, is the answer most frequently given by alumni when asked how their lives might have been different had they not been involved with a Boys Club.

"The Boys Club helped me to void trouble with the law:
Blacks - 84%, Hispanics -78% , Whites - 72%

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

Nearly 7 out of 10 report that their Boys Club involvement had a positive effect on their ability to avoid drug and alcohol problems.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE FOR THOSE IN NEED

More than 9 out of 10 alumni report that being in a Boys Club had a positive effect on heir lives, on learning to be a leader, on getting along with others and on the success later in live.

The survey shows that, though the years, Boys Clubs have served these population groups in greatest need. In the 1940s 9 out of 10 members were white, whereas in the 1980s, membership stands at 50% white, 29% Black and 12% Hispanic (with 9% choosing not to divulge their race.).

PREPARATION FOR LIFE

More than 9 out of 10 alumni believe that being in a Boys club is important to a boy's success later in life. More than 8 out of 10 alumni believe their Boys Club experience had a positive effect on their ability to work with others.

UPWARD SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Harris survey examined the occupation of the main household wage earner during the years when alumni participated, in contrast to the current occupation of former Club members. Almost twice as many alumni are professionals or managers today and the percentage of unskilled workers is nearly half that of the wage earners in the households in which they grew up.

Today, 2 out of 3 former Club members are professionals, managers, proprietors, skilled workers or in sales occupations.

EXHIBIT B

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5016
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Waters:

Funding for youth center projects could represent a significant impact to the City of Sacramento. The 1980 Census reports a city youth population of 48,994 with 29 percent living below the poverty level. The City currently operates ten community centers which include programming to provide sports, recreation, cultural activities, educational programs and employment training for youth. Approximately 117,500 teens alone took advantage of City baseline (non fee-based) programs in 1987-88.

Our City strongly supports your efforts to assist local government and public and private agencies to provide alternatives for the growing needs of children. Our City stands in support of Assembly Bill 2737, the Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988.

Sincerely,

TERRY KASTANIS, Chair
Law and Legislative Committee