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Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer, Sr. Announces his \$37.3 Million Plan for Youth Diversion Programs to End the School to Prison Pipeline

(Sacramento - July 12, 2018) – Today, Assemblymember Reginald Jones-Sawyer (D – South Los Angeles) unveiled his plan to end the school to prison pipeline, by securing \$37.3 million from the 2018-2019 California State Budget to establish the Youth Reinvestment Fund. This fund will help improve the outcomes of vulnerable youth populations by using trauma informed community and health-based interventions in lieu of arrest, detention and incarceration. Over \$1 million of the Youth Reinvestment Fund will be allocated to Native American Tribes for youth diversion programs.

“Today is a big day for the youth of California, as the Golden State is finally recognizing our duty to invest in vulnerable adolescents,” said Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer. “The Youth Reinvestment Fund will be used to divert our children from the juvenile justice system and provide them with the care and treatment they so desperately need to live productive lives.”

Through the use of diversion programs, a ten percent reduction in juvenile misdemeanors, or status offense arrests, will save California tax payers \$800 million per year. Status offenses such as running away from home, breaking curfew and getting into school fights have imprisoned nearly 35,000 kids in California alone. If these 35,000 children had been diverted from the juvenile justice system, California could have saved over \$8 billion. This funding could have been allocated to education, health or public safety programs.

“As the Chair of the Select Committee on the Status of Boys and Men of Color, I have traveled across the state listening to the voices of young children asking for help with the trauma they have experienced,” said Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer. “While \$37.3 million dollars is a great start, this represents only a small percentage of what is needed to help our vulnerable kids. We must continue to work together to finally end youth incarceration for minor offenses.”

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Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr. represents South Los Angeles, Florence-Firestone, Walnut Park, and a portion of Huntington Park. For more information about Assemblymember Jones-Sawyer, Sr., please visit <https://a59.asmdc.org/>