



**Press Release
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Governor Newsom Signs Historic Legislation that Creates Advisory Council to Improve Interactions Between Law Enforcement and People with Developmental Disabilities

Sacramento, CA — California’s developmental disabilities community applauds Governor Gavin Newsom’s groundbreaking passage of [Senate Bill 882](#) (SB 882) that takes a historic step in protecting the safety of Californians with developmental disabilities when interacting with law enforcement.

“This is a huge win for Californians with disabilities and their families,” said California Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman who authored SB 882. “For decades the disability community has been vocalizing its concerns about the disproportionate danger people with disabilities face when interacting with law enforcement. This bill takes crucial steps in addressing those concerns.”

According to the [California Department of Justice](#), 83.3% of individuals reported to have a developmental disability sustained serious bodily injuries from law enforcement encounters. Other [studies](#) estimate that between one-third and one half of all people killed by law enforcement officers have a disability.

“Because of the high incidence of death or serious injury suffered by people with disabilities during interactions with law enforcement, we joined organizations across the state in supporting this bill,” said Jordan Lindsey, Executive Director, The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy California Collaboration. “We strongly believe this legislation will significantly improve outcomes between our communities.”

The Arc of California and United Cerebral Palsy joined Association of Regional Center Agencies and UDW/AFSCME Local 3930 to sponsor SB 882, which creates an advisory council within the Attorney General’s office to evaluate the training police officers receive for interactions involving people with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness and make recommendations for improvement. This bill would also require law enforcement agencies to improve their reporting of incidents involving behavioral health and disabilities.

A recent survey by the [Little Hoover Commission](#) revealed that more than half of officers reported that certain subjects are not adequately covered by existing training curriculum, such as mental health, de-escalation, and use of force.

“Current law enforcement training and resources are inadequate to effectively meet the needs of the disability and mental health communities,” said Astrid Zuniga, home care worker and Vice President of UDW/AFSCME Local 3930.

Zuniga, whose 23-year-old son Manuel has autism, added “my son is non-verbal and needs round-the-clock supervision. As his caregiver, I must maintain a constant state of vigilance to protect him from harm. If he interacts with someone who doesn’t understand him, like a police officer, the encounter could be fatal.”

In March of 2022, Isaias Cervantes' story made national headlines. Cervantes, a young man with autism and hearing impairment, was shot and paralyzed within two minutes of officers making initial contact with him after they received a call from his family about a mental health crisis. "The officers were informed by the family that Isaias had autism and was nonverbal, yet they did not call for assistance from the department's mental evaluation team or employ de-escalation techniques learned in trainings," Zuniga said. "Unfortunately, this is not an unfamiliar story and families often report living in fear for their loved one if they need to call law enforcement for help."

"We have done great work here in California to create legislation that received overwhelming bipartisan support in both houses. The advisory council established under this bill will have a direct and positive impact on the work of law enforcement and protect the safety and wellbeing of Californians with disabilities," said Amy Westling, Executive Director, Association of Regional Center Agencies. "We are proud to join other states who enacted similar legislation and encourage the federal government to adopt similar policies."

In the past two years, Colorado, Connecticut and Massachusetts have all enacted legislation to improve police transparency and accountability.

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About The Arc of California

Since 1950, [The Arc of California](#) has been promoting and protecting the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

About United Cerebral Palsy

For more than 70 years, [United Cerebral Palsy](#) (UCP) educates, advocates and provides support services to ensure a life without limits for people with developmental disabilities and inclusion in every facet of society.

About Association of Regional Center Agencies

California's regional centers are a network of 21 community-based non-profits, represented by the [Association of Regional Center Agencies](#) (ARCA). The regional centers coordinate services for, and advocate on behalf of, nearly 400,000 Californians with developmental disabilities.

About UDW/AFSCME Local 3930

[United Domestic Workers of America \(UDW/AFSCME Local 3930\)](#) is a union made up of 155,000 home care and child care providers throughout California. UDW home caregivers provide critical services through the state's In-Home Supportive Services program (IHSS), which allows over half a million California seniors and people with disabilities to remain in their homes with dignity and independence. CCPU-UDW childcare members provide quality, affordable, home-based child care for thousands of California's working families.