



January 6, 2010

Honorable Pedro Nava, Member  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2148  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 984 – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Nava:

The Riverside Sheriffs' Association, which represents over 3,200 rank and file deputy sheriffs, sheriffs, deputy probation officers, law enforcement investigators and counselors, coroners, and bailiffs—the entire law enforcement team in Riverside County—supports your bill, AB 984.

A 1999 California law makes it illegal not to report a witnessed crime against a child under the age of 14, and is punishable as a misdemeanor with up to 6 months in jail and a maximum fine of \$1500. AB 984 will remove the victim's age threshold that requires an observer to report the act of a murder, rape, or other violent crime.

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 a young woman in Richmond, only 16 years old, left her high school dance to get a ride from her father when she joined some young men and began drinking with them. They soon began their assault. Several of the men beat her, robbed her, and began repeatedly raping her while people looked on without taking any action for 2 1/2 hours.

Police believe there were up to 10 attackers and anywhere from 15 to 20 people stopping to watch. Additionally, authorities said people took photos, laughed, and some joined in as the girl was repeatedly assaulted. People came and went, and no one called the police.

Because the victim was 16 at the time of the attack, law enforcement could not hold accountable the numerous witnesses to this brutal crime. They could not take them in for questioning.

AB 984 closes this loophole, protecting innocent crime victims and gives law enforcement the ability to arrest and bring to justice perpetrators of violent crime, such as the Richmond rape case.

Very truly yours,

Timothy H. B. Yaryan  
Legislative Counsel and Advocate

cc: Consultants/Members – Assembly Committee on Public Safety  
RSA