Dear Caro,

First and foremost, we’d like to thank you for your support and efforts in getting Assembly Bill 1238 all the way to the Governor’s desk. Getting it this far was no easy feat. We remain hopeful and encouraged to keep working with you at the state and local level to keep all pedestrians and bicyclists safe.

That being said, we are extremely disappointed that on October 8th Governor Newsom vetoed AB 1238, a significant bill that would have decriminalized “jaywalking” and protected our most vulnerable pedestrians from unprovoked enforcement stops and burdensome ticket fines. Our own Governor has chosen to hold Californian’s back by continuing to enforce antiquated, racist and car-centric laws.

In his veto letter, the Governor uses an incomplete and biased data source to claim that removing “jaywalking” laws would actually hurt pedestrians because over half of the pedestrian fatalities were the result of pedestrians taking actions against traffic control systems. This public data source is the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System, and is inherently biased because it only captures police reported data. Individual police officers are given full discretion to determine the primary crash factor based on car-centric laws that too often blame pedestrians and bicyclists for the lack of adequate infrastructure. Blaming individual people for the lack of infrastructure in their communities is both racist and classist, especially because it is well documented that Black, Indigenous, Communities of Color have the worst infrastructure across the state and the entire country.

The Governor’s veto of AB 1238 is a grave injustice and demonstrates his complicitness in state imposed violence towards all pedestrians, but especially the Black community who is too often stopped by law enforcement for “jaywalking”. It is unacceptable to both use biased data gathered by law enforcement to veto a bill that would protect our most vulnerable road users, while also not holding law enforcement accountable for the unequal enforcement of “jaywalking” laws all across the state. While the Governor expressed commitment to working towards reducing excessive force and bias in the enforcement of “jaywalking” laws in his veto letter, he does not explicitly state how or by when. It is very clear who the Governor has sided with. When given an opportunity to stand with
pedestrian safety experts and the 90+ organizations who supported this bill, Governor Newsom chose not to.

During the next few months we will be processing and reassessing our legislative agenda internally and with our local and statewide partners. We look forward to continuing to engage with all of you about antiquated "jaywalking" laws and other important safety efforts across the state. This feels like a major blow now, but we will continue to push forward together to co-create communities and public spaces that are welcoming and safe for all.

Finally, we invite you to join us on Friday, October 15th for America Walks’ "How to Take on Harmful Jaywalking Laws" webinar. I will join Michael Kelley, Policy Director at BikeWalkKC, Isaiah Thomas, Philadelphia City Councilmember and Charles T. Brown of Equitable Cities to share practical lessons, knowledge and tools to advocate for and organize around removing “jaywalking” laws in your community. Hope to see you there!

In solidarity,

Miha Babalai
Co-Executive Director

Caro Jauregui
Co-Executive Director

Have an item you want to share with the Cal Walks Network? Send an e-mail to Wendy Ortiz, Programs Director

Connect With Us:

Facebook
Twitter
Instagram

Contact Info

Headquarters
909 12th Street, Suite 122
Sacramento, CA 95814
www.calwalks.org | info@calwalks.org | Tel. (714) 742-0741

unsubscribe