YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Commission Meeting

Public Meeting

September 19, 2026

9:30 AM

Digital NEST

210 Salinas Street

Salinas, CA 93901

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Call to Order

Commissioner Aidan Lin-Tostado, Chair

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Disclaimer

The information and opinions expressed by presenters or public commenters before the Commission reflect the views of the speaker. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or the Office of Service and Community Engagement.

Land Acknowledgement

Commissioner Aidan Lin-Tostado, Chair

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Review of the Agenda

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Public Meeting Agenda

September 19, 2026

- Welcome
- Public Comment on matters not on the agenda
- New Commissioner Swearing In

Break

- Legislative Updates/Planning – ACTION
- Gubernatorial Election & Transition Engagement – DISCUSSION
- Next Steps for Staff Action
- Adjournment

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Establishment of Quorum & Public Comment Process

Jennifer Serrano

Public Comment – *Welcome*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

Jennifer Serrano

Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card for any item not on the agenda
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

New Commissioner Swearing In

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

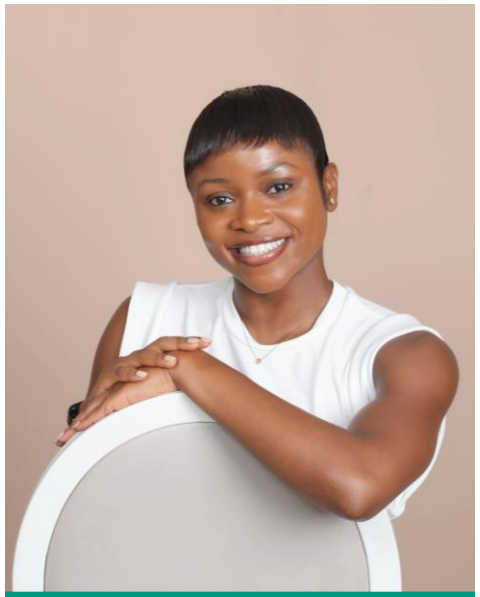
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Welcome to Our New Commissioners!



Autumn Ragone

San Francisco



Eunice Abel

Superior



Fabian Molina

Northern San Joaquin



Leilani Wong

Orange County



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Public Comment – *New Commissioner Swearing In*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

BREAK
10 Minutes

We will be back at TBD

Legislative Updates/Planning – ACTION

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Legislative Updates and Planning

Bill	Author	Bill Title	YEC Position	Legislative Status	Commissioner Endorser & Supporters
AB 1669	Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco	Student Health: Medical Leaves of Absence: Mental Health	Support	**Enroll**	Avanti Ramraj and Andrea Terrones
SB 802	Senator Angelique Ashby	Housing Finance and Development: Sacramento Area Housing and Homelessness Agency	Support	**Enroll**	Wednesday Pope
SB 492	Senator Monique Limón	Youth Housing Bond Act of 2026	Support	**In Process**	Trevor Merrell and Aidan Lin-Tostado
AB 1967	Assemblymember Rick Zbur	Juveniles	Support	**Enroll**	Wednesday Pope and Xitlaali Castellanos
SB 98	Senator Aisha Wahab	Elementary, Secondary, and Postsecondary Education: Immigration Enforcement: Notification	Support	**Chaptered (2025)**	Xitlaali Castellanos and Aidan Lin-Tostado
AB 461	Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens	Truancy (Repeal of Criminal Penalties for Parents of Chronically Truant Students)	Support	**Chaptered (2025)**	Aidan Lin-Tostado and Andrea Terrones
AB 46	Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen	California Youth Empowerment Commission	Support	**Chaptered (2022)**	Raj Bhutoria, Wednesday Pope, Andrea Terrones, and Avanti Ramraj
AB 602	Assemblymember Matt Haney	Campus Overdose Prevention Act (Public Postsecondary Education: Student Conduct: Controlled Substances)	Support	**Chaptered (2025)**	Avanti Ramraj

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Letter to the Governor

Public Comment – *Legislative Planning/Updates – ACTION*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Legislative Updates/Planning – ACTION

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Gubernatorial Election & Transition Engagement – DISCUSSION

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

Alain Datcher, Consultant, 54th & Hyde

~10 MIN

Context: Why a Letter, Why Now, Why the Youth Empowerment Commission

*Aligning the Commission's purpose and goals **(Context)** for this letter, before finalizing the **Content***

WHY THIS LETTER

Direct Alignment to YEC's Strategic Plan and Goals

1.2 Give CA decision-makers youth-informed insights and proposals

3.2 Amplify youth-centered campaigns with State, local, and community partners

3.3 Inspire more young people to take part in civic engagement

5.4 Partner with State and community orgs to spread awareness

WHY NOW

An Opportunity to Engage CA's Future Leadership Proactively

Nov 3 Californians elect a new Governor

2027–31 The next term spans nearly all of our 2025–2030 plan

Jan 2027 First budget proposal but priorities take shape well before the transition

11 of 13 Voting commissioners are appointed by the Governor

WHY US

The YEC is a Bridge, a Convener and Best Positioned

AB 46 Charges us to advise the Governor and Legislature on youth issues

Voice Many youth we represent can't vote yet or might be unaware of the process; this letter is one way they're heard

Reach We connect young people, elected leaders, and community organizations statewide

DISCUSS **What do we want the next Governor to understand about California's youth on Day One?**

~25 MIN

Content: What Belongs in the Letter?

Main goal for today is to finalize the core sections in the letter

1 YEC's Background & Purpose

How do we introduce YEC in three to four sentences? What makes the YEC voice unique from other commissions and youth advocacy organizations?

2 An Invitation / Call to Action

What exactly are we asking for? A meeting, a clear plan, a youth forum, a written response? By when, and with whom?

3 Tone & Posture

The same letter goes to both candidates. How do we remain nonpartisan while ensuring YEC priorities are clear?

4 What Success Looks Like

If this letter works, what outcomes are the YEC hoping to see before the new Governor's first budget in January?

5 What Youth Are Telling Us

Which 2-3 priorities have arisen from our hearings, surveys, and outreach? Whose voices are still missing and how might these impact the candidate's goals?

DISCUSS What might be missing in this letter? What is uniquely important for the YEC to write vs. another organization? What is the best practicable request to include that supports YEC in meeting our outcomes?

~15 MIN

Confirm: Finalizing the Writers, Roles & Responsibilities

THE LETTER

Confirm the drafting team

Who drafts? YEC Chair and Vice-Chair, supported by YEC staff.

Who provides input? How might other commissioners weigh in before 9/25?

Who shares it? Once released, which channels and partners can carry it?

BEYOND THE LETTER

Encouraging Youth to Engage in other ways

CA Youth and organizations can choose to write or email both candidates and share their own stories, increase support for YEC

Get Out the Vote

Encouraging Youth and Young Adults to Vote, share a quick list of the YEC priorities, ensuring young voters are registered

Encourage Orgs to Host Forums and Educational Sessions

Youth orgs and local youth commissions host nonpartisan election conversations.

Organize around YEC priorities

Partners adopt the letter's priorities as their own asks following Nov 3. Plan to re-engage following the election.

DISCUSS **What can the YEC create to amplify youth voice and impact during the Gubernatorial election?**

Important Reminder: the YEC informs and engages; but does not endorse.

~10 MIN

Next Steps: Draft Ready by September 25



Today
Agree on core content and finalize the letter drafting team

Draft the letter
Drafting team writes with staff support; proposed check-in 9/22 and 9/24

Draft complete
Full draft ready for review

Review
YEC staff and Governor's Office internal review; final approval steps set by YEC staff

Target release
Ideally before ballots mail Oct 5 and registration closes Oct 19

Follow through
Election Day, then outreach to the Governor-elect before the first budget

BEFORE WE LEAVE TODAY

- ✔ Drafting writers confirmed
- ✔ Top youth priorities chosen (or a plan to choose them)
- ✔ Our invitation/call to action to the candidates defined
- ✔ Community engagement pathways we'll promote

DISCUSS

What support do the drafters need to meet 9/25 deadline?

How and when will the full Commission see the draft?

Who follows up when the candidates respond?

Approval steps and release date to be confirmed by YEC staff.

Public Comment – *Gubernatorial Election & Transition Engagement – DISCUSSION*

In Person

- Complete and submit public comment card
- Separate public comment cards for each agenda item
- Listen for your name and line up by the podium
- Staff will call your name to the podium
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

Virtual

- Visit **youthempowerment.ca.gov/meetings-events**, and complete the public comment form linked there to be added to the queue
- Listen for your name
- When you hear your name, click “Raise Hand” under the “Participants” menu in your Zoom platform, or press *9 if you are joining by phone
- Staff will ask you to unmute your microphone
- Please adhere to the time limit determined by the Chair (2 minutes)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Next Steps for Staff Action

Thomisha Wallace, Executive Director

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

Adjournment

Commissioner Aidan Lin-Tostado, Chair

Next Commission Meeting:

November 14, 2026
Fresno, CA

In person and virtual

Website:
youthempowerment.ca.gov

Email:
youthempowermentcommission@opr.ca.gov