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**Prozac Found In System Of CYA Teen Found Dead**

## ***State Senator Threatened During Prison System Investigation***

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**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** -- An autopsy report on two teens who committed suicide in a California Youth Authority facility showed something that came as a big surprise to one of teen's parents.

Deon Whitfield, 18, and former Stockton resident Durrell Feaster, 17, were found hanged inside a Preston youth facility dorm room in mid-January. Officials believe the acts were suicides. The autopsy report shows that at the time Feaster died, he had significant amounts of Prozac in his system.



Feaster's mother, Gloria Feaster, said neither she nor her husband ever gave the California Youth Authority permission to administer such a drug.

California Youth Authority officials did not comment specifically about the case Thursday, but they did explain their psychotropic drug policy for minors. The CYA says it always sends out a consent form to parents. If the parents don't respond within 21 days, a parole agent visits their home to try and gain consent. If that proves unsuccessful, the CYA can and does ask a judge to grant permission to administer drugs -- like Prozac -- without the parents ever being notified.

It is a policy that is again in the crosshairs of outspoken CYA critic, state Sen. Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles.

"That is a very serious drug, with no notification to parents. That concerns me. If CYA is doing that, those policies need to be reexamined and stopped. There are parental rights," Romero said.

### **State Senator Threatened**

Romero also announced Thursday that she was the victim of a death threat during the middle of her investigation into the California prison system. On Feb. 13, a letter addressed to Romero and containing white powder was sent to a correctional training facility next to the Salinas Valley State

Prison, according to officials. They say the letter contained threatening language like, "getting killed over some inmates isn't smart."

The California Highway Patrol and the FBI are investigating the possibility that the letter was sent by a state employee, possibly a prison guard.

Romero released a statement Thursday, saying she remains steadfast in her effort to clean up California's corrections system.



"I want to make it very clear: I will not be intimidated by threatening messages and acts of cowardice," Romero said in the statement. "It is a shameful day in California when a Senator and her family are threatened with death for doing the work of the people who elected me to serve them. I do not intend to keep looking over my shoulder or conduct my work in fear. I will not succumb to any threats or stop my prison visits."

The FBI has tested the white powder and determined it is not dangerous or toxic.

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