

January 17, 2024

ALAMEDA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION



The Honorable Gavin Newsom California State Governor 1021 O Street, Suite 9000 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Proposed Elimination of Housing Supports for Foster Youth

Dear Governor Newsom,

ALLIANCE for CHILDREN'S

RIGHTS



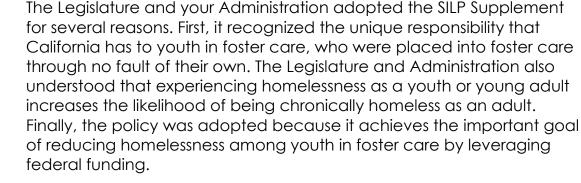
The undersigned coalition of organizations are writing to express concern about two budget cuts included in your Administration's proposed 2024-25 budget that will increase homelessness among foster youth. These include \$18.8 million (General Fund, ongoing) for the Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) Supplement and \$13.7 million (General Fund, ongoing) for the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program.



The SILP Supplement was included in the FY 23-24 budget. It will provide a supplementary payment to foster youth placed in a SILP, based on the cost of housing in the county where they live. These young people currently receive \$1,206 monthly for all living expenses: rent, food, utilities, clothing, transportation and more. Given this low rate and escalating housing costs, 1 in 5 current foster youth in California have at least one episode of homelessness between ages 18 and 21.











The undersigned organizations support the foster care rate reforms underway. However, their focus is on ensuring foster children and youth in family settings receive the correct level of care, such as mental health counseling. They do not address the housing affordability crisis experienced uniquely by young people who live in a SILP and they do not address the needs of young adults in foster care living independently.



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Children's Law Center



Children's Receiving Home of Sacramento







The second proposed reduction of concern is the elimination of the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program, which pays for supportive services for 1,300 foster youth who have a federal housing voucher specifically for former foster youth. These vouchers are known as Family Unification Program (FUP) and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers.

Prior to the creation and expansion of the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program, these federal vouchers were underutilized in California because there was not a source of public funding to provide the required supportive services. Since the creation and expansion of the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program, the number of vouchers has increased 54% in California, bringing \$22 million in federal investment to California annually. The effectiveness of this expansion is one key reason why homelessness among transition-age youth has decreased 16% between 2020 and 2023. If this program is eliminated, this effective state/federal partnership will come to a halt and put 1,300 youth at risk of homelessness.

We appreciate the complexity of the state budget and the need to responsibly steward scarce public resources. However, we request that your Administration sustain its long-standing commitment to children and youth in foster care by revisiting these decisions and maintaining these important state investments.

Thank you for all you have done for the children and youth of California. We look forward to ongoing dialogue about these important issues in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

John Burton Advocates for Youth Alameda County of Education Aldea All Saints Church Foster Care Project Alliance for Children's Rights Allies for Every Child Aspiranet Association of Community Human Services Better Youth, Inc. **Beyond Emancipation** Bill Wilson Center Butterfly's Haven California Alliance of Caregivers California Alliance of Child and Family Services California State Association of Counties California Youth Connection Casa de Amparo









FOSTERING PROMISE — Advocates 4 change —







Kamali'i











Casa Pacifica Centers for Children and Families Catholic Charities of Santa Clara Children Now Children's Advocacy Institute Children's Law Center of California Children's Receiving Home of Sacramento Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice Corporation for Supportive Housing County Welfare Directors Association of California Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Los Angeles Creative Alternatives Crittenton Services for Children & Families Doing Good Works Edgewood Center for Children & Families **Encompass Community Services** First Place for Youth Foster Care Counts Foster Greatness Fostering Promise Gather Respect Advocate Change Engage (GLIDE) GRACE/End Child Poverty California Hillsides Hollywood NOW Housing Authority of the County of Contra Costa Just in Time for Foster Youth Kamali'i Foster Family Agency, Inc. Lens Co Lutheran Social Services of Northern California Mary's Path Oak Grove Sanctuary Palm Springs **Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services** Orange County United Way Orangewood Foundation Peacock Acres Public Counsel Reedley College Robles, LLC Safe Place for Youth Santa Ana Housing Authority Seneca Family of Agencies Specialty Family Foundation StarVista Stepping Forward LA Students Rising Above **Sycamores** Tha Hood Healers Unity Care Waking the Village



Counsel



























Walden Family Services Wellnest Urban Strategies Council

Cc: Members, Senate Budget Committee Members, Assembly Budget Committee Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3 Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4 Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5 Chris Woods, Office of the Senate Pro Tempore Mareva Brown, Office of the Senate Pro Tempore Jason Sisney, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly Kelsy Castillo, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly Jessica Bartholow, Office of Senator Skinner Tania Dikho, Office of Assemblymember Tina Bethany Renfree, Office of Senator Durazo Elizabeth Schmitt, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3 Timothy Griffiths, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4 Nicole Vasquez, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 Genevieve Morelos, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5 Chantelle Denny, Senate Republican Fiscal Office Megan De Sousa, Assembly Republican Fiscal Office Diana Boyer, County Welfare Directors Association of California Rosie McCool, Chief Probation Officers of California Justin Garrett, California State Association of Counties Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office Lourdes Morales, Legislative Analyst's Office Angela Short, Legislative Analyst's Office Dr. Mark Ghaly, Health & Human Services Agency Kim Johnson, Department of Social Services Angie Schwartz, Department of Social Services Jennifer Troia, Department of Social Services Sasha Kergan, Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency Gustavo Velasquez, Dept. of Housing & Community Development Jennifer Seeger, Department of Housing & Community Development Pedro Galvao, Department of Housing & Community Development Joe Stephenshaw, Department of Finance Gavle Miller, Department of Finance Kris Cook, Department of Finance Kia Cha, Department of Finance Marlon Davis, Department of Finance Chris Hill, Department of Finance Andrew March, Department of Finance Blair Huxman, Department of Finance