



Judicial Council of California

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July 12, 2023

Hon. Dave Cortese
Member of the Senate, District 15
1021 O Street, Suite 6640
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Senate Bill 9 (Cortese), as amended May 18, 2023—Support

Dear Senator Cortese:

The Judicial Council is pleased to support SB 9, which authorizes, subject to an appropriation by the Legislature or other source of funding, a three-year pilot program to extend foster care services to non-minor dependents who are up to 22 years of age, in at least three counties that choose to participate in the program.

In 2009 the Judicial Council was a co-sponsor of Assembly Bill 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act (Beall, Stats. 2010, ch. 559), because it implemented a key recommendation of the council's California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care final report that foster care supports and services be extended to age 21 to allow those who are still in foster care when they approach legal maturity to receive the support needed to achieve a successful transition into adulthood. Providing the court with an additional year of jurisdiction will offer the court a powerful tool to ensure that youth who remain in foster care and are facing homelessness or are at reasonable risk of homelessness if they exit care can be served for an additional year while a plan for housing is developed.

California's implementation of extended foster care has been the subject of a multiyear study by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, called the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH), which over the course of ten years collected data from youth, child welfare workers, and the California Department of Social Services to measure outcomes as a result of extending foster care services and juvenile court jurisdiction for youth ages 18 to 21. Their

research found that extended foster care reduced the risk of homeless for youth who remained in care significantly compared to youth who exited foster care at age 18.¹

During the COVID-19 pandemic emergency the legislature extended foster care support payments to youth who would otherwise have aged out of eligibility. Those payments prevented them from experiencing homelessness because of the pandemic disruptions to the economy. That extension has expired but nonminor dependents who are approaching age 21 are still disadvantaged as a result of lost educational and employment opportunities caused by the pandemic. SB 9 will provide courts in the pilot counties with a tool to protect those youth in care as they approach age 21 who are at risk of homelessness and provide an additional year to plan for their long-term housing consistent with the recommendations of the Work Group. In addition, it will help inform future policies on how to prevent homelessness for this vulnerable population.

For these reasons, the Judicial Council supports SB 9.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 916-323-3121.

Sincerely,



Tracy Kenny
Acting Supervising Attorney

TK/lmm

cc: Mr. Cliff Costa, Legislative Advocate, California Judges Association
Ms. Jessica Devencenzi, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Ms. Millicent Tidwell, Acting Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California
Ms. Shelley Curran, Chief Policy & Research Officer, Judicial Council of California

¹ Feng, H., Harty, J., Okpych, N. J., & Courtney, M. E. (2020). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Predictors of homelessness at age 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/PDF/CY_PH_IB0520.pdf