

## **State Budget Includes Record-Level Investments in Youth Who Have Been in Foster Care or Homeless**

*Budget Includes 12 Proposals Championed by John Burton Advocates for Youth*

July 19, 2021

On Friday, Governor Gavin Newsom signed the California State Budget for 2021-22, which includes key investments for youth who have been in foster care or homeless, championed by John Burton Advocates for Youth.

### **\$8 Million to Provide Safe, Stable Housing for Former Foster Youth**

The state budget includes \$8 million to provide safe, stable housing for transition-age youth in California's Transitional Housing Program (THP). This annual funding comes at a critical time: a May 2021 [survey](#) of foster youth in California found that 1 in 5 had experienced homelessness since the start of the pandemic. With this investment, THP will assist an estimated 1,295 youth annually. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$5 Million to Help Foster Youth Locate and Secure Housing**

The state budget includes \$5 million for the Housing Navigators Program (HNP) to provide intensive, specialized housing search assistance for transition-age youth. This program was previously a one-time investment. With the passage of the state budget, HNP is now an ongoing program, helping an estimated 1,225 foster youth locate and secure housing annually. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$9 Million to Strengthen the Safety Net for Foster Youth in High-Cost Counties**

The state budget includes \$9 million to maintain housing in high-cost parts of California by establishing a supplementary payment to the state's transitional housing program for former foster youth (THP-Plus). In California, the cost of housing has significantly outpaced the amount of funding for THP-Plus, resulting in longer waiting lists, increased homelessness, fewer supportive services, and the displacement of youth from their community. With this \$9 million annual investment, counties in high-cost parts of the state will receive a supplementary payment to maintain housing and supportive services for 759 youth annually. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$200 Million to Reduce Youth Homelessness**

The state budget includes \$2 billion over two years to address homelessness, with a requirement that 10% of funding (\$200M) is directed to address youth homelessness. This funding can be used for the provision of housing and supportive services, including permanent, affordable housing, shelter, housing navigation, case management and more. This proposal was co-sponsored with Bring California Home, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, Housing California and a statewide coalition of over 350 organizations. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$220 Million to Develop Housing for Youth Experiencing Homelessness**

The state budget includes \$2.75 billion for Homekey, a statewide program that provides funding to purchase and rehabilitate housing, including hotels, motels, vacant apartment buildings, and other buildings and convert them into interim or permanent, long-term housing. The budget requires 8% of Homekey funding be used to address youth homelessness. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$30 Million to Assist College Students Facing Homelessness and Food Insecurity**

California community college students are facing food insecurity and homelessness at alarming rates, worsened by the pandemic. "Basic needs centers" have been established on select college campuses but lack public funding to sufficiently meet the need. The state budget ensures "basic needs centers" can keep college students on track by providing \$30 million annually to establish a Basic Needs Center and hire a Basic Needs Coordinator at each of California's 115 community colleges. This funding will assist an estimated 86,250 students annually. This funding is in addition to \$100 million one-time funding to be spent over three years to

address community college student food insecurity, also included in the budget. The proposal for ongoing funding was co-sponsored by the Student Senate for California Community Colleges and Young Invincibles. For more information, follow this [link](#).

### **\$15 Million to Support Foster Youth to Attend College**

Foster youth struggle to complete college as many must work full time to make ends meet while simultaneously juggling coursework. With the adoption of the budget, foster youth will now be eligible to receive up to an additional \$6,000 per year in financial aid through the Cal Grant program while attending an eligible California college or university. This will function as a vital lifeline for foster youth working towards completing their higher educational goals. This proposal was championed by the Office of the Governor and actively supported by JBAY.

### **\$30 Million to Address Learning Loss Among Foster Youth**

Foster youth have been deeply impacted by the pandemic, with over 1 in 4 K-12 students reporting that they had stopped attending classes and 1 in 10 reporting that they had dropped out of school. To address this, the state budget includes a one-time \$30 million investment to address learning loss experienced by foster youth during the pandemic. Funding will be provided to county offices of education to provide tutoring, educational case management, post-secondary preparation or career exploration and learning recovery. This proposal was co-sponsored by First Star and the National Center for Youth Law.

### **\$1.8 Million to Support Young Parents in Foster Care**

The state budget includes \$1.8 million to establish an expectant parent payment, provided to young people in foster care starting three months before the birth of their child. This new public benefit will ensure expectant youth in foster care are well-prepared for the birth of their child. This proposal was co-sponsored by the Alliance for Children's Rights, Black Women for Wellness, California Association of Student Councils, Children's Law Center of California and the National Center for Youth Law. Learn more at this [link](#).

### **\$200,000 to Train Social Workers and Probation Officers on Housing**

The state budget includes \$200,000 to train child welfare workers and probation officers working with older youth on housing and the homelessness response system. This requirement will ensure child welfare workers and probation officers are equipped to assist current foster youth with achieving stable housing while in care and as they transition out of care, including how to help youth identify shared living settings, rental units, services available through the local Coordinated Entry System and homeless Continuum of Care, permanent affordable housing and specialized Housing Choice Vouchers.

### **Improved Sexual and Reproductive Health for Foster Youth**

The state budget requires county social workers to include in reports to juvenile courts whether youth or nonminor dependents in the foster care system have received comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act.

### **Increased Access to Post-Secondary Education for Foster Youth**

The state budget requires county social workers to include in reports to juvenile courts whether youth or nonminor dependents in the foster care system have received assistance applying for college, including financial aid, as required by state law.

### **Acknowledgements**

John Burton Advocates for Youth would like to express gratitude to the individuals and organizations with whom we worked to make these achievements possible. Thank you to Governor Gavin Newsom, Assembly Member Phil Ting, Assembly Member Blanca Rubio, Assembly Member Luz Rivas and Assembly Member Marc Berman.

Thank you also to the public agencies, campuses, nonprofit organizations, and youth who worked closely with John Burton Advocates for Youth to make the case for these important investments, including the Children's Law Center of California, Student Senate for California Community Colleges, Young Invincibles, Black Women for Wellness, California Association of Student Councils, First Place for Youth, the California Alliance of Child and Family Services, the County Welfare Directors Association of California, Housing California, Corporation for Supportive Housing, California Coalition for Youth, the Youth Law Center, the California Youth Connection, Children Now, the Alliance for Children's Rights and the National Center for Youth Law. Thank you also to the generous foundations and individuals that support John Burton Advocates for Youth.

**About John Burton Advocates for Youth**

John Burton Advocates for Youth improves the quality of life for youth in California who have been in foster care or homeless by advocating for better laws, training communities to strengthen local practices and conducting research to inform policy solutions. It was founded in 2005 by John Burton, a former member of Congress, the California State Assembly, and President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate. For more information, please visit [www.jbay.org](http://www.jbay.org) or contact Executive Director, Amy Lemley at [Amy@jbay.org](mailto:Amy@jbay.org).

**For More Information about the State Budget**

For more information about child welfare and youth homelessness related items included in the state budget, refer to the following [summary table](#). For information about the overall state budget, visit the state budget [website](#).