



February 20, 2024



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,



The undersigned coalition of organizations, public agencies, and young adults 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 Legislature and your Administration adopted the SILP Supplement for several reasons. First, it recognized the unique responsibility that California has to youth in foster care, who were placed into foster care through no fault of their own. The Legislature and Administration also understood that experiencing homelessness as a youth or young adult increases the likelihood of being chronically homeless as an adult. Finally, the policy was adopted because it achieves the important goal of reducing homelessness among youth in foster care by leveraging federal funding.



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.



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
Abode Services



Alameda County Office of Education
Aldea



All Saints Church Foster Care Project
Alliance for Children's Rights
Allies for Every Child



Alternative Family Services
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 Competes
California State Association of Counties
California Youth Connection



Casa de Amparo
 Casa Pacifica Centers for Children and Families
 Catholic Charities of Santa Clara
 Child Advocates of Silicon Valley
 Children Now



Children's Advocacy Institute
 Children's Law Center of California
 Children's Receiving Home of Sacramento
 City Without Orphans



Coalition for Responsible Community Development
 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
 Cty Housing



David and Margaret Child and Family Services
 Doing Good Works
 EA Family Services
 Edgewood Center for Children & Families
 El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency



Encompass Community Services
 Everychild Foundation
 The Feather House Foundation



First Place for Youth
 Foster Care Counts
 Foster Greatness
 Fostering Promise



Fresh Lifelines for Youth
 Gather Respect Advocate Change Engage (GLIDE)



Generation Up
 GRACE/End Child Poverty California
 Heritage Group Homes, Inc.



Hillsides
 Hollywood NOW



Housing Authority of the County of Contra Costa
 iFoster
 Irvine Valley College Guardian Scholars Program



Just in Time for Foster Youth
 Kamali'i Foster Family Agency, Inc.
 Lens Co



Los Angeles County
 Lutheran Social Services of Northern California
 Make it Happen for Yolo County
 Mary's Path
 Mesa



Monterey County Children and Family Services Agency
New Alternatives



Northern California College Promise Coalition
Oak Grove Sanctuary Palm Springs
Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services
Orange County United Way
Orangewood Foundation



Peacock Acres
Progress Foundation



Public Counsel
Reedley College
The Rightway Foundation



Robles, LLC



Sacramento County Executive Office
Safe Place for Youth



San Benito County Health and Human Services Agency
San Bernardino County Administrator's Office



Sanctuary of Hope LA
Santa Ana Housing Authority

A Sense of Home

Seneca Family of Agencies

Silegra

Specialty Family Foundation

St. Andrew's Residential Programs for Youth



StarVista

Stepping Forward LA

Students Rising Above



Sycamores

Tha Hood Healers

TLC Child and Family Services



Unity Care

Waking the Village

Walden Family Services

Wellnest

Whole Person Learning

Urban Health, Inc.

Urban Strategies Council

Youth and Family Programs



And 203 young adults who have experienced foster care in California:



Roslyn Acosta, San Diego County

Sebastian Acosta, Santa Clara County

Jahaziel Aguilera, San Diego County

Ngozi Alumona, Los Angeles County

Laura Alvarez, Fresno County

Yazmin Alvarez Bernabe, Fresno County

Sarah Anderson, Merced County





Malia Apelu, San Diego County
 Priscilla Arciniega, San Diego County
 Marlene Arellano, Orange County
 Desiree Armstrong, Los Angeles County
 Shauneace Arrington, Los Angeles County
 Victoria Ashley, Yolo County



Kassandra Bahena, Los Angeles County
 Maria Baldovinos, San Bernardino County
 Grace Banks, Los Angeles County



Carol Bardoff, Alameda County
 Daniel Barragan, Sutter County
 Esmeralda Barrera, Los Angeles County
 Sharyn Baumheckel, Santa Clara County



Ana Betina Bustillo, Sonoma County
 Daniel Bisuano, Riverside County



Natasha Bradfield, Butte County
 Elena Bringhurst, Fresno County



Naseer Brown, Orange County
 Freya Brown, Merced County
 Tashianna Brown, San Bernardino County



Alex Buckley, San Diego County
 Ashley Burch, San Diego County
 Azula Burke, Los Angeles County



Richard Butcher, San Francisco County
 Laura Caballero, San Bernardino County
 Iziko Calderon, Los Angeles County



Ashlee Campbell, San Diego County
 Yontae Capers-Stinson, Placer County
 Jesse Cardenas, Sacramento County



Katherine Carpenter, Merced County
 Mariah Carrera, Los Angeles County
 Brenda Castillo, Los Angeles County



Mariah Chavez, Sonoma County
 Artem Chebnev, Los Angeles County
 Alex Chiang, Contra Costa County



Karli Cirovski, San Diego County
 Kelly Clamens, San Bernardino County
 Christina Cole, Sacramento County



Mariah Corder, Los Angeles County
 River Covey, Merced County
 Elijah Crane, Los Angeles County



Christina Crimi, San Bernardino County
 Travis Crown, Los Angeles County
 Andrea Cruz, Los Angeles County
 Vanessa Cruz Plascencia, Los Angeles County
 Rashanda Dauphine, Los Angeles County
 Kalila Davis, San Francisco County



Gabriela De La Torre, San Diego County
 Jessica Demartini, Riverside County
 Sherbert Diaz, Los Angeles County
 Carina Dimapilis, San Diego County



A SENSE OF HOME

Destiny Dominguez, Contra Costa County
 Michelle Doupe, Los Angeles County
 Monique Dunn, San Diego County



Jeanna Edrei, Orange County
 Marcelo Elliott-Lopez, Sonoma County

silegra

Machi England, San Diego County
 Richard Espinoza, Sacramento County



Jasmine Espinoza, Butte County
 Emily Estrada, Los Angeles County

Stepping Forward LA



Damian Faulhaber, San Diego County
 Luis Flores, San Diego County



Kayla Fuerte, Orange County
 Destiny Galvan, Los Angeles County



Leila Gilkerson, Los Angeles County
 Stephanie Gomez, Orange County

Violet Gonzales, Los Angeles County
 Joyce Gonzales, Yuba County



Natalie Goodliffe, Los Angeles County
 Kayla Gordon, Los Angeles County

Carissa Guillen-Neria, Los Angeles County
 Monica Guss, Merced County

Selena Gutierrez, Los Angeles County
 Whimzi Ha, Butte County



Yvonne Hampton, San Bernardino County
 isiaah haro, Orange County



Joachim Hausser, Orange County
 Tajanea Hayes, Sonoma County

Vicclaudiana Hernandez, San Diego County
 Karina Hernandez, Los Angeles County

Ashley Holly, Butte County
 Tyrese Holt, Sacramento County



Yuki Huang, Los Angeles County
 Lisa Huggins, Sonoma County

Juleian Isaiah, Orange County
 Rozan Jaara, Santa Clara County



Naomi Jimenez, San Bernardino County
 Adriana Johnson, Los Angeles County



Whole Person Learning

Faith Johnson, Los Angeles County
 Derrianna Johnson, Los Angeles County

Katherine Jones, Los Angeles County
 Jean Juarez, San Diego County



Dakota Kaiser, Los Angeles County
 Dennis Kelley, Contra Costa County



Jason Koster, San Francisco County
hailey koster, Contra Costa County
Zarah Latifi, Los Angeles County
Carolina Llerenas, Los Angeles County
Juliana Lopez, Yolo County
Luzvianeth Lopez, Butte County
Navya Mackey, Butte County
Jeffrey Madrid, San Diego County
Gilbert Manuel A., San Diego County
Melissa Martel, Los Angeles County
Nicholas Martinez, San Diego County
Victoria Martínez, San Diego County
Alina Medina, Shasta County
Maybelline Mejia, Orange County
Jade Mendez, Los Angeles County
Emilia Mendoza, Los Angeles County
Ari Metzli, Los Angeles County
Angelyn Meza, Butte County
Quincy Monroe, Los Angeles County
Joelynn Montelongo, Yolo County
Tina Moraga, San Diego County
Jaimeyana Morris, Los Angeles County
Brian Morrissette, Los Angeles County
Crystal Mueller, San Diego County
Nataly Munoz, Solano County
Nataly Munoz, Sacramento County
Ilynn Nava, San Joaquin County
Maria Olaiz, Orange County
Aamiyah Orozco, Orange County
Victoria Ortiz, Orange County
Joseph Osborn, Alameda County
Deyanira Paulino, Orange County
Axel Pecero, Orange County
Keegan Pederson
Caitlin Peterson, San Joaquin County
Kaylee Peterson, Los Angeles County
Rosalinda Pina, Orange County
Aaron Polanco, Orange County
Angel Ponce, Sacramento County
Wednesday Pope, Yolo County
Cherise Pratti, Orange County
Sarah Prince, Orange County
Charles Prowse, Orange County
Seth Putnam, Orange County
Adriana Quiroz, Orange County
Isela Ramirez, Orange County
Sasha Randolph, Orange County

Raylene Raya, Orange County
Destiny Raya, San Bernardino County
Lucy Razo, Riverside County
Pika Ritz, Orange County
Murjaz Rivers, San Diego County
Elizabeth Robinson, Orange County
Aahloni Robinson, Orange County
Tamary Robinson, Orange County
Maria Rocha, Orange County
Kevin Rodriguez, Orange County
marian rodriguez, San Diego County
Billi Romain, Alameda County
Francisco Romero, Orange County
Leonardo Romero, Orange County
Dianna Romero, Orange County
Nathalie Romero, San Diego County
Cristian Rosete, San Diego County
Janet Sandoval, Orange County
Jazmine Sapenter-Coulter, Orange County
Isbella Saylor, Orange County
Jodi Schenck, San Diego County
Jacob Seibert, Orange County
Nathaniel Serros, Orange County
Blake Shimabukuro, Orange County
Chaely Sieh, Solano County
Sara Smith, Alameda County
Jenessa Smith, Orange County
Anthony Solomon, Orange County
Ana Sosa
Kadie Staggs, Orange County
Samantha Stanley, Sacramento County
Lauren Stanton Horsey, Orange County
Joel Swazo, Orange County
Rafaela Tapia Rodriguez, San Diego County
Talya Thompson, Orange County
Ari Tippett, Orange County
Sean Tomm
Carolyn Travis, Los Angeles County
Amy Utter, San Diego County
Madeline Utter, Los Angeles County
Mark Utter, San Diego County
AlexGrey Valdez, Los Angeles County
Emilio Valladolid, San Diego County
Ashley Vargas, El Dorado County
Christiana Walton, Los Angeles County
Aleecyah Ward, Los Angeles County
Keairah Washington, Madera County

Deandre Waters, Kern County
Joshua Weatherbee, San Diego County
Amari Weatherby, San Joaquin County
Lania Whiteside, Madera County
Emanuel Williams, Kern County
Amy Williamson, Riverside County
Alyx Wilson, Sacramento County
Tyler Zeno, Los Angeles County

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Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 4
Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
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