Insert your organization’s logo here

**Please submit via email to** **leg.unit@gov.ca.gov** **and CC** **jessica@jbay.org**

Insert today’s date here

The Honorable Gavin Newsom

Governor of California

1021 O Street, Ninth Floor

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Request for Signature- AB 2508 (McCarty)**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of [Organization’s name], thank you very much for the numerous reforms you have enacted to improve postsecondary education for California’s foster youth. Thanks to this leadership, there has been a 42% increase in foster youth enrollment in California’s community colleges. I am writing today to respectfully request your signature on AB 2508, authored by Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, to continue upon this progress. AB 2508 will expand eligibility to CalKIDS so that all foster youth in grades one through twelve will be able to receive an additional $500 in their college savings account rather than only students who are in the foster care system during the first grade receiving this payment.

[**OPTIONAL**: include a paragraph about your organization’s specific knowledge of need for this bill]

As you are well aware, most foster youth face extreme poverty and have neither a financial nor emotional safety net in place as they navigate adulthood. CalKIDS is an innovative program that can significantly increase the chances of a youth enrolling and graduating from college, however only first graders who are identified as low-income, foster youth or homeless youth are eligible for the additional $500 augmentation in their account. With 46% of all foster youth entering the system after the age of 6, this leaves nearly half ineligible for this additional funding.

AB 2508 will expand CalKIDS eligibility to all foster youth in first through twelfth grades so that each student will receive an additional $500 in their college savings account, thereby increasing the likelihood that foster youth have the necessary resources to reach their educational goals.

There is currently $17 million remaining from a $25 million one-time appropriation in 2019/20 for the Scholarshare Investment Board (SIB) available to administer the program. According to the Department of Treasury (DOT), the intended use of this unspent funding is for future costs related to the existing newborn incentive program. The incentive program has been utilized on a limited basis and has not used any of the $17 million in unspent funding for this purpose. AB 2508 has a sunset date of January 1, 2029, which will enable it to fund the estimated $10.8 million in one-time costs associated with implementing AB 2508 with no additional cost implications.

Thank you again for your commitment to California’s foster youth. AB 2508 is aligned with this commitment and is an important step towards California’s goal of educational equity. For these reasons, [your organization’s name] respectfully requests your signature.

Sincerely,

Signature

Full Name

Title/Organization