

JBAY staff members and youth advocates



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

John Burton Advocates for Youth

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Background

John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) is a nonprofit organization founded by former President of the California State Senate, John Burton in 2004. Operating statewide with staff in Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz, JBAY focuses on youth and young adults who have experienced foster care or homelessness aged 13 to 26, addressing the unique challenges they face due to trauma, instability, and lack of consistent, unconditional care.

Mission & Purpose

John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) is dedicated to improving the well-being of young people in California who have experienced foster care or homelessness. We achieve this mission through four key strategies:

Advocating for Stronger Legislation

Advancing policies that provide critical support and resources to foster and homeless youth.

Training Communities

Equipping service providers with education and tools to enhance local practices.

Conducting Research

Using data-driven insights to inform policy solutions and drive meaningful change.

Partnering with Lived Experts

Collaborating with young people who have firsthand experience with homelessness or in foster care to shape impactful policies.



JBAY's Executive Director, Sarah Pauter



JBAY's founder, the Late Honorable John Burton, former President pro Tempore of the California Senate

Advocacy & Accomplishments

- ☑ **Expansion of Foster Care to Age 21:** Successfully advocated for extending foster care services from age 18 to 21, providing extended support during critical transition years.
- ☑ **Increased Investment in Campus Support Programs:** Secured funding for support programs across all California community colleges, California State Universities, and University of California campuses, aiding foster youth in higher education. JBAY also secured ongoing funding for campus Basic Needs Centers, providing support to students experiencing homelessness or basic needs insecurity.
- ☑ **Establishment of the California Foster Youth Tax Credit:** Successfully advocated for the creation of the nation's first and only tax credit specifically for current and former foster youth, increasing average income by 12% and decreasing poverty by 7%.
- ☑ **Increased Housing Stability for Former Foster Youth:** Expanded state funding for supportive housing for former foster youth from $4.8 million to $90.9 million, increasing capacity by 70%.
- ☑ **Expanded Financial Aid:** JBAY has successfully advocated for extensive financial aid reform and expansion, making college more affordable to students with experience in foster care or homelessness.
- ☑ **Secured Youth-Specific Homelessness Funding:** In 2018-19, JBAY secured a 5% youth set-aside in the state's homelessness response funding. Since then, this set-aside funding has grown to 10%, served over 50,000 youth, and reduced youth homelessness by 24%.
- ☑ **Passage of 55 Legislative Reforms:** Since its founding, JBAY has successfully advocated for 55 legislative reforms, resulting in over $3.6 billion in new state investments for youth who have been in foster care or homeless.