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AB 2764: Extended Foster Care

SUMMARY

AB 2764 would create uniform eligibility standards for Extended Foster Care programs statewide, making it easier for vulnerable youth to access housing and support.

BACKGROUND

Research indicates that 31 to 46 percent of young people who experience foster care become homeless by age 26. In response, California established the Extended Foster Care (EFC) program in 2010, following federal authorization in 2008. EFC is recognized as one of the state's most effective strategies for preventing youth homelessness, providing eligible young adults with stable housing and support to develop independent living skills during their transition to adulthood. Youth who exit foster care before age 19 are three times more likely to experience homelessness than those who remain in care.

According to the UC Berkeley Child Welfare Indicators Project, as of October 1, 2025, 7,422 young adults ages 18 to 21 were participating in EFC statewide. One third of these youth are placed in the Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD) program, which offers rent-free housing and tailored supportive services. To be eligible for EFC, a young person must have been in foster care on their 18th birthday and meet at least one of five federal participation requirements: completing high school or a GED program, enrolling at least half-time in college or a vocational program, working at least 80 hours per month, participating in an employment preparation program, or being unable to meet other criteria due to a documented medical or mental health condition.

PROBLEM

Despite the success of the Extended Foster Care (EFC) program, inconsistent county-level practices continue to create barriers to youth seeking access to these critical housing supports. Since EFC's inception, youth and their advocates have reported restrictive entry requirements that are not based on state or federal law, such as mandatory participation in both work and school. For example, one Southern California county requires youth to demonstrate "full-time productivity" by working 32 hours a week at either school or a job to be eligible for Transitional Housing Placement (THP).

In some cases, youth are involuntarily discharged from programs for failing to meet participation conditions that exceed legal standards. For instance, a Northern California county expects youth to work or volunteer at least 10 hours per week, even if they are regularly attending a school program.

These practices imposed by counties, courts, or foster care providers undermine the intent of EFC, leading to housing instability, homelessness, and wasted opportunities for youth to access federally funded support before aging out.

SOLUTION

AB 2764 would ensure consistent and fair eligibility for Extended Foster Care (EFC) statewide, so all youth have equal access to housing and support, regardless of their county or caseworker. The bill would also align state law with new licensing standards for Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD) programs, preventing providers from adding extra eligibility requirements. These changes would remove unlawful barriers, reduce unnecessary housing disruptions, and promote stability for youth transitioning to adulthood, ultimately helping to prevent homelessness among foster youth.

SUPPORT

California Alliance of Child and Family Services (Co-sponsor)
John Burton Advocates for Youth (Co-sponsor)
California Youth Connection (Co-sponsor)

Alliance for Children's Rights
Association of Community Human Service Agents
California Alliance of Caregivers
California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association
California Family Resource Association
California Lawyers Association, Family Law Section
California Teachers Association
California Youth Empowerment Network
Child Abuse Prevention Center
Children Now
Children's Law Center of California
County Welfare Directors Association of California
Depaul USA
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Everychild Foundation
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Los Angeles County Office of Education
Redwood Community Services
St. Anne's Family Services
Stanford Youth Solutions
Sycamores
The Village Family Services
Walden Family Services