



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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LANCE M. LARSON
Director of Legislative Affairs

April 12, 2010

The Honorable Jim Beall
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 12 (Beall) - As amended on April 5, 2010 - SUPPORT

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support AB 12, legislation that would allow California to draw down newly-available federal funds to provide enhanced support for relative caregivers and foster youth from age 18 to 21. AB 12 would increase the time period that the state would offer transitional support to foster youth and provides the framework for extending services up to youth up to age 21.

AB 12 would also allow California to draw down the new federal matching funds by modifying the state's successful Kin-GAP program to align with the new federal requirements, thereby allowing the use of federal dollars to support relative guardians and augment the program. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, this provision alone would allow the state to save an estimated \$70 million in 2010-11 and annually thereafter in the Kin-GAP program.

Each year, more than 200 youth "age out" of San Bernardino County's foster care system at 18 or 19 years of age, depending on whether they are close to high school graduation. These young people face a difficult transition to adulthood completely on their own, with no family to rely on for support and guidance. Emancipated youth who do not receive assistance are more likely to be incarcerated, unemployed and/or homeless, which results in high costs to the county's public systems.

San Bernardino County strongly supports all efforts to obtain additional funding and flexibility at both the state and federal levels to provide robust transitional services to foster youth such as housing, employment services, and increased access to aid. The County also supports ongoing services for former and emancipated foster youth to help ensure the future success of this vulnerable population. For these reasons, the San Bernardino County joins with the California State Association of Counties in supporting AB 12. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lance Larson, the County's Director of Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821. The Board thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten signature of Gary C. Ovitt]

GARY C. OVITT
Chairman, Board of Supervisors