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**LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**  
385 North Arrowhead Avenue  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110  
(909) 387-4821

GREGORY C. DEVEREAUX  
Chief Executive Officer

July 27, 2011

The Honorable Gloria McLeod  
California State Senate  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 578 (McLeod)** – As amended 06/29/11 – **SPONSOR**

Dear Senator McLeod:

The San Bernardino Board of Supervisors is pleased to sponsor SB 578. This measure would increase the number of foster youth who obtain their high school diploma in a timely manner by requiring each public school district and county office of education to issue and accept full or partial credits for coursework satisfactorily completed by a dependent or ward while attending a public school, juvenile court school, or nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency to be applied to core curriculum and graduation requirements.

Existing law requires that schools must award all students full or partial credits for coursework satisfactorily completed by a pupil while attending a public school, juvenile court school, or nonpublic or nonsectarian school. While statute requires that these credits must be accepted, there is nothing in statute requiring that schools apply the accepted credits towards the core curriculum and graduation requirements.

Often the transferred credits are applied towards elective courses rather than the core curriculum. This practice often means that these foster youth will lag behind their peers, essentially losing months of academic progress with each change in school placement due to no fault of their own. Additionally, this can lead to the youth choosing to drop out of high school rather than retaking courses that they have already completed.

The most recent amends clarify that a pupil in foster care will not be required to retake a portion of a course which has already been completed unless all stakeholders determine that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. Additionally, in an effort to ensure that foster youth are provided every opportunity to continue their education past high school the recent amendments specify that no pupil in foster care is prohibited from retaking or taking a course in order to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University System or the University of California.

SB 578 will enable more foster youth to graduate in a timely manner and will increase the number of high school graduates among foster youth. The academic success of an individual is a key determinant in preparation for the future. This bill is a step towards ensuring every young adult's ability to flourish.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino is pleased to sponsor SB 578. If you have any questions, please contact Josh Candelaria, Deputy Legislative Director at (909) 387-4280.

Sincerely,

JOSIE GONZALES  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

*The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.*