Assembly Bill 2005: Supporting Transition Age Youth with Developmental Disabilities

BACKGROUND

Youth in foster care are eligible to participate in the extended foster care (EFC) program until their 21st birthday if they meet certain requirements:

- Live somewhere approved by their social worker;
- Participate in the development of a Transitional Independent Living Case Plan (TILCP), which is a list of goals, objectives, and persons responsible for assisting the youth to achieve those goals; and
- Work or go to school, or have a medical condition that prohibits them from working or going to school.

PROBLEM

The EFC program requirements were not intended to prevent youth with certain medical conditions and developmental delays from participating in the program. In fact, there are numerous references in statute to ensure that non-minors with competency issues can still access the benefits and services of EFC. (WIC §§ 317(e)(1), 11403(b)(5), 11400(u)). These youth—often also served by a regional center and who may never be able to be fully independent—need the services obtained through EFC to ensure a successful transition to adulthood.

However, because of inconsistencies in the statute, youth in foster care are still being inappropriately denied access to extended foster care because of their disability. Additionally, when youth with disabilities are able to participate in EFC, there is often a lack of collaboration and coordination between the different systems serving the youth.

SOLUTION

This bill aims to improve outcomes for transition age youth in foster care with developmental disabilities by:

- Clarifying that youth with medical conditions or developmental disabilities in foster care remain eligible for EFC even if they are unable to participate in the development of a TILCP.
- Ensuring that youth with medical conditions or developmental disabilities receive meaningful and appropriate case plans tailored to their needs by requiring the social worker, probation officer, or tribal entity to develop the TILCP in consultation with individuals such as the youth’s counsel, conservator, guardian ad litem, caregiver, regional center case worker, and other persons identified as important in the youth’s life.

SUPPORT

Children’s Law Center of California (Sponsor)

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