

MARIE ALVARADO-GIL

4TH SENATE DISTRICT



SB 1197 (Alvarado-Gil): In-home respite services: resource families.

SUMMARY

In-home respite services offer caregivers much-needed relief from the constant demands of caring for children and adults with developmental disabilities, services that are crucial to maintaining regional center consumers in home settings. This bill will clarify the availability of these services through regional centers for certain children and non-minor dependents in the foster care system.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, SB 84 (Human Services), sought to clarify the roles and responsibilities of agencies serving children dually served by the child welfare and developmental services systems. SB 84 intended for AFDC-FC children residing with relatives and non-relative extended family members, or in foster family or small family homes not vendored by regional centers, to be eligible for in-home respite services, which had not been the practice under older regulations governing regional centers. However, SB 84 erroneously referenced an inapplicable regulation, thus hampering the law's implementation.

SB 84 remains problematic due to its incorrect citation. Compounding the issue further are recent changes in child welfare law that have left SB 84 in need of updating to account for "resource families" and "non-minor dependents."

PROBLEM

Because the law contains erroneous and outdated information, regional centers provide in-home respite to AFDC-FC children inconsistently. While some regional centers comply with the intent of SB 84, nearly half cite antiquated standards in their purchase of service policies. As a result, families have been denied services deemed to be critical under SB 84 in maintaining children and youth in their foster or adoptive homes, thus risking costly placements in residential care facilities.

SOLUTION

This bill will rectify the inaccurate citation in the law and clarify the language used to describe caregivers to align with current child welfare law.

SUPPORT

Public Counsel (co-sponsor)
Children's Law Center of California (co-sponsor)

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