



COUNTY OF YOLO

Board of Supervisors

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County Administrator, **Patrick S. Blacklock**
Deputy Clerk of the Board, **Julie Dachtler**

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Blanca Rubio
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2043 (Arambula) Foster youth: response system — SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

Yolo County supports AB 2043 by Assembly Member Arambula, which would establish a Family Urgent Response System for Foster Youth and Caregivers. AB 2043 would provide immediate response to current or former foster youth and their caregivers in times of emotional crisis that will help keep families intact.

Counties are diligently working to implement the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) effort, which seeks to reduce use of congregate care and serve foster youth in home-based settings, cared for by loving resource families. CCR envisioned that services would be brought to the home, rather than requiring foster youth to move from family to congregate care in order to receive needed services. Unfortunately, one key element missing from the CCR reform effort is an immediate response system to stabilize youth in their homes and communities during times of emotional or behavioral stress. For youth in the foster care system who have traumatic experiences, even minor incidents can become triggers that result in an emotional outburst or negative behaviors. Without immediate support, youth and their caregivers can feel quickly overwhelmed. This can result in the breakdown of that family unit, leading to a placement disruption which further traumatizes the youth, or calls to law enforcement which send the youth down the undesired trajectory of the juvenile justice system.

AB 2043 will fill this gap by providing immediate access to de-escalation and behavioral support interventions on the phone and in the home at the moment when this need arises. AB 2043 accomplishes this by establishing a statewide, toll-free number for foster youth and their caregivers to access real-time assistance and make a direct connection to local response systems. These local response systems would provide in-person response to assess and stabilize the situation and link the youth and caregiver to the existing array of county- and community-based services. Both the state-level and local response teams would include responders trained in trauma-informed response with expertise to diffuse a crisis and link to ongoing supports and services.

In our county, this would support youth and caregivers by providing an immediate response to situations that may escalate and either result in youth running away and placing them in harm's way or disrupting the placement for the youth. Having support and resources that are immediately available when crisis arise will increase our retention of homes that are willing to

provide a family home for youth with increased needs for behavioral interventions and mental health support. This will in turn support the intention of Continuum of Care Reform to serve children and youth where they live and assist with reduction of children and youth in congregate care.

Foster youth with traumatic experiences need loving and stable relationships to grow and heal from their trauma. AB 2043 prevents the unnecessary separation of the youth from their caregiver that will lead to improved outcomes sought through the CCR reform effort.

For these reasons, Yolo County supports AB 2043. Please contact Alexander Tengolics in the County Administrator's Office at (530) 666-8068 or alexander.tengolics@yolocounty.org with any questions about the County's position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Oscar Villegas".

Oscar Villegas
Chair, Yolo County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Joaquin Arambula
 The Honorable Richard Pan
 The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
 The Honorable Kevin McCarty
 The Honorable Bill Dodd