

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2727**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Klehs**

February 24, 2006

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An act to amend Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster care.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2727, as introduced, Klehs. Foster care services.

Existing law declares the intent of the Legislature to preserve and strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the public. Existing law includes various provisions relating to the provision of appropriate placement and other services for children in foster care.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to a provision relating to foster children.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions
- 2 Code is amended to read:
- 3 16000. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to preserve and
- 4 strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the
- 5 child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary
- 6 for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the
- 7 public. If a child is removed from the physical custody of his or
- 8 her parents, preferential consideration shall be given whenever

1 possible to the placement of the child with the relative as  
2 required by Section 7950 of the Family Code. If the child is  
3 removed from his or her own family, it is the purpose of this  
4 chapter to secure as nearly as possible for the child the custody,  
5 care, and discipline equivalent to that which should have been  
6 given to the child by his or her parents. It is further the intent of  
7 the Legislature to reaffirm its commitment to children who are in  
8 out-of-home placement to live in the least restrictive, most family  
9 like setting and to live as close to the child's family as possible  
10 pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 16501.1. Family  
11 reunification services shall be provided for expeditious  
12 reunification of the child with his or her family, as required by  
13 law. If reunification is ~~not possible or likely~~ *impossible or*  
14 *unlikely*, a permanent alternative shall be developed.

15 (b) It is further the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all  
16 pupils in foster care and those who are homeless as defined by  
17 the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42  
18 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.) have the opportunity to meet the  
19 challenging state pupil academic achievement standards to which  
20 all pupils are held. In fulfilling their responsibilities to pupils in  
21 foster care, educators, county placing agencies, care providers,  
22 advocates, and the juvenile courts shall work together to maintain  
23 stable school placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed  
24 in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the  
25 academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment  
26 activities that are available to all pupils. In all instances,  
27 educational and school placement decisions ~~must~~ *shall* be based  
28 on the best interests of the child.