

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 24, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1766

Introduced by Assembly Member Nazarian

February 14, 2014

An act to add Section 16523 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster care.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1766, as amended, Nazarian. Foster youth: transitional housing pilot project.

Existing law establishes the Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) program, under which counties provide payments to foster care providers on behalf of qualified children in foster care. The program is funded by a combination of federal, state, and county funds, with moneys from the General Fund being continuously appropriated to pay for the state's share of AFDC-FC costs.

Existing law requires the State Department of Social Services to adopt regulations to govern county transitional housing placement programs that provide supervised housing services to persons at least 16 years of age and not more than 18 years of age, with specified exceptions, who satisfy the requirements of the AFDC-FC program, are in out-of-home placement, as specified, and are participating in, or have successfully completed, an independent living program. Existing law requires that in order for a facility to participate in a transitional housing placement program, the facility shall obtain certification from the county department of social services or county probation department that the facility satisfies certain criteria.

This bill would authorize the County of Los Angeles, in conjunction with the University of California at Los Angeles and *a First Star, Incorporated, or a related* nonprofit child advocacy organization, to participate in a pilot project to establish the University-Affiliated First Star High School Academy, under the administration of the State Department of Social Services. The bill would require that the academy be licensed as a transitional housing placement provider, but would specify certain alternative requirements for the project including, among others, that the academy serve foster children who are attending high school and are at least 13 years of age. The bill would require the department to prepare a report evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot project and to submit it to the Legislature by January 1, 2020. The bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the County of Los Angeles.

This bill would provide that the continuous appropriation for the state's share of the AFDC-DF costs would not be made for purposes of implementing the bill.

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

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

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature find and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) Only 50 percent of foster youth graduate from high school.
- 4 (b) Only 3 percent of former foster youth graduate from a
- 5 four-year college, even though more than 70 percent express a
- 6 desire to earn a college degree.
- 7 (c) In Los Angeles County, 24 percent of former foster youth
- 8 will have experienced homelessness within two years of leaving
- 9 the foster care system.
- 10 (d) Approximately 60 percent of young women in foster care
- 11 will become pregnant by 20 years of age.
- 12 (e) Within two years of leaving the foster care system, 64 percent
- 13 of young men and 30 percent of young women are incarcerated.
- 14 (f) With approximately 5,200 youth aging out of foster care
- 15 every year in California, the cost to state and local governments
- 16 of homelessness, incarceration, and indigence of former foster
- 17 youth is \$165 million per year.

1 (g) The college environment has a holistic effect on students,
2 and impacts not only the academic but also the psychosocial aspects
3 of students' development.

4 (h) Large colleges and universities have specialists in the areas
5 of medicine, law, psychology, sociology, communication, and
6 education who can greatly augment the services provided to foster
7 youth by county child welfare agencies.

8 (i) The existing First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholar
9 Summer Academy offers ~~a summer program to foster youth, which~~
10 ~~consists~~ *four, month-long annual residential summer programs*
11 *on the campus of the University of California, Los Angeles, to*
12 *foster youth in each of the four years of their high-school*
13 *education, with at least one additional day of instruction per month*
14 *during the remainder of each year. The academy consists of*
15 *daylong scheduled classes, programs, and activities that provide*
16 *two to four undergraduate academic credits each summer session,*
17 *as well as the social and emotional preparation necessary to flourish*
18 *in college and the skills necessary to gain acceptance into college*
19 *and successfully transition into adulthood.*

20 (j) Extending the First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholar
21 Summer Academy to a year-round placement option would allow
22 foster youth to fully realize the benefits of this college environment.

23 SEC. 2. Section 16523 is added to the Welfare and Institutions
24 Code, to read:

25 16523. (a) The department shall implement a pilot project in
26 the County of Los Angeles, at the option of the county, in
27 conjunction with the University of California at Los Angeles and
28 ~~a~~ *First Star, Incorporated, or a related* nonprofit child advocacy
29 organization, to establish the University-Affiliated First Star High
30 School Academy. The academy shall be licensed as a transitional
31 housing placement provider pursuant to this article and Section
32 1559.110 of the Health and Safety Code, but shall include all of
33 the following components:

34 (1) The academy shall serve foster children who are attending
35 high school and are at least 13 years of age, but who do not exceed
36 the age limit specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section
37 16522.1.

38 (2) The academy shall be limited to a program described in
39 paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 16522, however,
40 residential facilities for participants and supervisory adults may

1 include configurations including, but not limited to, dormitory,
2 multioccupant, clustered, hub, and other housing layouts and
3 arrangements as are commonly found in a college or university
4 environment.

5 (3) The program staffing ratio of ~~case manager~~ *staff member* to
6 client shall not exceed one to three.

7 (b) The academy shall be reimbursed at *160 percent of* the
8 monthly rate specified in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of
9 subdivision (a) of Section 11403.3.

10 (c) The department shall prepare a report evaluating the
11 effectiveness of the pilot project and shall submit the report to the
12 appropriate committees of the Legislature by January 1, 2020.

13 (1) This subdivision shall become inoperative on January 1,
14 2024, pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code.

15 (2) The report to be submitted pursuant to this subdivision shall
16 be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government
17 Code.

18 SEC. 3. No appropriation pursuant to Section 15200 of the
19 Welfare ~~an~~ and Institutions Code shall be made for purposes of
20 this act.

21 SEC. 4. The Legislature finds and declares that a special law
22 is necessary and that a general law cannot be made applicable
23 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California
24 Constitution because of the unique circumstances in the County
25 of Los Angeles with regard to the existing First Star UCLA Bruin
26 Guardian Scholar Summer Academy.