

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 17

Introduced by Assembly Member Lopez

May 22, 2015

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 17—Relative to the Foster Care Tax Credit Act.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 17, as introduced, Lopez. Foster Care Tax Credit Act.

This measure would urge the President and the Congress of the United States to enact Senate Bill 664, known as the Foster Care Tax Credit Act, which would provide tax relief to short term foster parents by helping to cover the actual costs of caring for a foster child.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Foster parents make a positive and tremendous
2 difference in the lives of so many vulnerable children by opening
3 their hearts and homes. However, it is a constant challenge to
4 recruit and retain enough foster families to ensure each child is
5 placed in a family-like setting; and
6 WHEREAS, Caring for a child in foster care can be more
7 expensive than caring for one's own biological children. Children
8 placed into foster care often have experienced significant emotional
9 and physical trauma and have higher incidences of medical and
10 behavioral health issues, resulting in additional costs to foster
11 parents. On average, current foster care rates would have to
12 increase almost 40 percent nationwide to provide for basic care;
13 and

1 WHEREAS, Foster parents do not always jump into full-time
2 foster parenting immediately. It is not uncommon for foster parents
3 to begin by providing shorter-term respite or emergency care before
4 “graduating” into more full-time foster parenthood. Likewise,
5 foster parents may intend to be full-time; however, their placements
6 are reunified with biological families after short lengths of time,
7 but these foster parents may have multiple placements for 3 to 4
8 months at a time. One-quarter (26 percent) of all children who
9 exited foster care in 2013 lived in foster care for less than six
10 months; and

11 WHEREAS, The shortage of foster homes has been widely
12 reported. According to the Los Angeles Times, “Demand for foster
13 beds exceeds supply by more than 30% nationally. Forty percent
14 of parents withdraw during their first year, and an additional 20%
15 say they want out, national studies show. Those families that
16 remain are often stuck in deep poverty themselves”; and

17 WHEREAS, The more people we can encourage to become
18 foster parents, the greater the number of children who will be
19 adopted from foster care. In the 2012 fiscal year, 50,663 of the
20 children who exited foster care nationwide were adopted. Of the
21 children adopted from foster care in 2012, 54 percent were adopted
22 by former foster parents. In 2012, that would have equated to
23 27,358 children adopted by former foster parents; and

24 WHEREAS, Senate Bill 664 of the 114th United States
25 Congress, known as the federal Foster Care Tax Credit Act, would
26 seek to help the many families who care for foster children for six
27 months or less, who unlike longer term foster families, are not
28 eligible for tax credit assistance under the federal Child Tax Credit,
29 to cover the actual cost of caring for foster children; and

30 WHEREAS, The Foster Care Tax Credit Act provides tax relief
31 to short term foster parents and helps cover the actual costs of
32 caring for a foster child by establishing an inflation-adjusted,
33 refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000 per year, per foster child,
34 which is prorated by the number of months a foster child is in a
35 family’s care; now, therefore, be it

36 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
37 *California, jointly,* That because foster parents make significant
38 and meaningful contributions to the lives of so many vulnerable
39 children by opening their hearts and homes, the Legislature urges
40 the President and the Congress of the United States to enact Senate

1 Bill 664 of the 114th United States Congress, known as the Foster
2 Care Tax Credit Act, which would provide tax relief to short term
3 foster parents by helping to cover the actual costs of caring for a
4 foster child; and be it further
5 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
6 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
7 States, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of
8 Representatives, the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the
9 Senate, and each member of the California delegation to the United
10 States Congress.

O