

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 25, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

**Assembly Joint Resolution**

**No. 17**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Lopez**

May 22, 2015

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 17, as amended, 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~~ *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~~ *homes, and yet California faces constant*  
5 *challenges in recruiting and retaining* enough foster families to  
6 ensure each child is placed in a family-like setting; and  
7 WHEREAS, Caring for a child in foster care can be more  
8 expensive than caring for one’s own biological children. Children  
9 placed into foster care often have experienced significant emotional  
10 and physical trauma and have higher incidences of medical and  
11 behavioral health issues, resulting in additional costs to foster  
12 parents. On average, current foster care rates would have to

1 increase almost 40 percent nationwide to provide for basic care;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Foster parents do not always ~~jump into~~ *begin*  
4 full-time foster parenting immediately. It is not uncommon for  
5 foster parents to ~~begin by providing~~ *first provide* shorter-term  
6 respite or emergency care before “graduating” into more full-time  
7 foster parenthood. Likewise, foster parents may intend to be  
8 full-time; however, ~~their placements are~~ *children placed with them*  
9 *may be* reunified with *their* biological families after short lengths  
10 of ~~time, but these foster time~~. Foster parents may have multiple  
11 placements for ~~3 to 4~~ *three to four* months at a time. ~~One-quarter~~  
12 ~~(26 percent) of all children who exited foster care in 2013 lived in~~  
13 ~~foster care for less than six~~ *According to the Public Policy Institute*  
14 *of California, in California in 2010, 31 percent of children left*  
15 *foster care within three months; and*

16 WHEREAS, The shortage of foster homes has been widely  
17 reported. According to the Los Angeles ~~Times~~, *Times in 2015*,  
18 “Demand for foster beds exceeds supply by more than 30%  
19 nationally. Forty percent of parents withdraw during their first  
20 year, and an additional 20% say they want out, national studies  
21 show. Those families that remain are often stuck in deep poverty  
22 themselves”; and

23 WHEREAS, ~~The more people we can encourage to become~~  
24 ~~foster parents, the greater the number of children who will be~~  
25 ~~adopted from foster care. In the 2012 fiscal year, 50,663 of the~~  
26 ~~children who exited foster care nationwide were adopted. Of~~  
27 *Encouraging individuals to become foster parents can contribute*  
28 *to a greater number of children being adopted from foster care.*  
29 *According to the United States Department of Health and Human*  
30 *Services, of the children adopted from foster care in 2012, 54*  
31 *percent were adopted by former foster parents. In 2012, that would*  
32 *have equated to 27,358 children adopted by former foster parents;*  
33 and

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

1 WHEREAS, The Foster Care Tax Credit Act provides tax relief  
2 to ~~short-term~~ *short-term* foster parents and helps cover the actual  
3 costs of caring for a foster child by establishing an  
4 inflation-adjusted, refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000 per year,  
5 per foster child, which is prorated by the number of months a foster  
6 child is in a family's care; now, therefore, be it

7 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*  
8 *California, jointly,* That because foster parents make significant  
9 and meaningful contributions to the lives of so many vulnerable  
10 children by opening their hearts and homes, the Legislature urges  
11 the President and the Congress of the United States to enact Senate  
12 Bill 664 of the 114th United States Congress, known as the Foster  
13 Care Tax Credit Act, which would provide tax relief to short term  
14 foster parents by helping to cover the actual costs of caring for a  
15 foster child; and be it further

16 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
17 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
18 States, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of  
19 Representatives, the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the  
20 Senate, and each member of the California delegation to the United  
21 States Congress.