

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JULY 9, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 25, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 17

Introduced by Assembly Member Lopez

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Atkins, Baker, Bloom, Bonilla, Bonta, Brown, Burke, Calderon, Campos, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Cooper, Dababneh, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gipson, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Hadley, Roger Hernández, Holden, Irwin, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Kim, Levine, Linder, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, McCarty, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, O'Donnell, Olsen, Perea, Quirk, Rendon, Rodriguez, Salas, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Ting, Wagner, Weber, Wilk, Williams, and Wood)

May 22, 2015

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 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, and yet California faces constant challenges
4 in recruiting and retaining enough foster families to ensure each
5 child is 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

14 WHEREAS, Foster parents do not always begin full-time foster
15 parenting immediately. It is not uncommon for foster parents to
16 first provide shorter-term respite or emergency care before
17 "graduating" into more full-time foster parenthood. Likewise,
18 foster parents may intend to be full-time; however, children placed
19 with them may be reunified with their biological families after
20 short lengths of time. Foster parents may have multiple placements
21 for three to four months at a time. According to the Public Policy
22 Institute of California, in California in 2010, 31 percent of children
23 left foster care within three months; and

24 WHEREAS, The shortage of foster homes has been widely
25 reported. According to the Los Angeles Times in 2015, "Demand
26 for foster beds exceeds supply by more than 30% nationally. Forty
27 percent of parents withdraw during their first year, and an
28 additional 20% say they want out, national studies show. Those
29 families that remain are often stuck in deep poverty themselves";
30 and

31 WHEREAS, Encouraging individuals to become foster parents
32 can contribute to a greater number of children being adopted from
33 foster care. According to the United States Department of Health
34 and Human Services, of the children adopted from foster care in
35 2012, 54 percent were adopted by former foster parents. In 2012,
36 that would have equated to 27,358 children adopted by former
37 foster parents; and

38 WHEREAS, Senate Bill 664 of the 114th United States
39 Congress, known as the federal Foster Care Tax Credit Act, would
40 seek to help the many families who care for foster children for six

1 months or less, who unlike longer term foster families, are not
2 eligible for tax credit assistance under the federal Child Tax Credit,
3 to cover the actual cost of caring for foster children; and

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

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

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