

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 27, 2006

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2005–06 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1876

Introduced by Assembly Member Leslie

January 19, 2006

An act to add and repeal Chapter 12.97 (commencing with Section 18986.70) of Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1876, as amended, Leslie. Foster Child Welfare Act of 2006.

Existing law provides for oversight by various state and local entities of certain populations of children, including those who are wards of the juvenile court, and those who are in foster care, or are otherwise under the supervision of county welfare departments.

This bill, the "Foster Child Welfare Act of 2006," would require the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services, with the county's consent, to conduct a one-year pilot program to achieve permanency solutions for at-risk foster clients in the county, by working with faith-based institutions and other appropriate nonprofit organizations. The bill would define "at-risk foster clients" for purposes of the pilot program. *The bill would require the county to use reasonable and prudent judgment in selecting participating faith-based institutions and nonprofit organizations, consistent with the bill's objectives and existing nondiscrimination laws and policies.* It would require the county department to submit a report evaluating the pilot program to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the

State Department of Social Services, and other county human services departments.

This bill would appropriate \$100,000 from the General Fund to the county for purposes of conducting the pilot program. It would declare that special legislation is necessary due to the unique circumstances applicable to Placer County with respect to foster care.

This bill would make its provisions inoperative on July 1, 2008, and repealed as of January 1, 2009, unless these dates are extended by a later enacted statute.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
 State-mandated local program: no.

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

- 1 *SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
- 2 *following:*
- 3 *(a) Children of African-American descent are more likely than*
- 4 *children from other ethnic groups to be referred to the child*
- 5 *welfare system.*
- 6 *(b) Children of African-American descent are proportionally*
- 7 *more likely than children from other ethnic groups to enter foster*
- 8 *care.*
- 9 *(c) Across age categories, children of African-American*
- 10 *descent are the highest percentage of children in foster care.*
- 11 *(d) Children of African-American descent stay in the child*
- 12 *welfare system longer than children from other ethnic groups.*
- 13 *(e) Children of African-American descent in both relative and*
- 14 *nonrelative placements are the ethnic group least likely to*
- 15 *reunify over time.*
- 16 *(f) Children of African-American descent are more likely than*
- 17 *children from other ethnic groups to reenter the child welfare*
- 18 *system after reunification.*
- 19 *(g) Children of African-American descent are less likely than*
- 20 *children from other ethnic groups to be placed with some or all*
- 21 *of their siblings.*
- 22 *(h) It is therefor the intent of the Legislature to enact the*
- 23 *“Foster Child Welfare Act of 2006,” to demonstrate both of the*
- 24 *following:*

1 (1) *The effectiveness of this child welfare model in reducing*
2 *the prevalence of children of African-American descent in the*
3 *state child welfare system.*

4 (2) *The effectiveness of this child welfare model in reducing*
5 *the prevalence of other high risk clients within the state child*
6 *welfare system.*

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 **SEC. 2.** Chapter 12.97 (commencing with Section 18986.70)
9 is added to Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions
10 Code, to read:

11
12 **CHAPTER 12.97. PLACER COUNTY FOSTER CARE PERMANENCY**
13 **PILOT PROGRAM**

14
15 18986.70. (a) This chapter shall be known and may be cited
16 as the “Foster Child Welfare Act of 2006.”

17 (b) The Placer County Department of Health and Human
18 Services shall conduct a one-year pilot program pursuant to this
19 chapter to achieve permanency solutions for at-risk foster clients
20 in the county. The pilot program shall be conducted with the
21 consent of the county.

22 (c) The county department shall contact all faith-based
23 institutions and other appropriate nonprofit organizations within
24 the county and shall work with those entities to identify liaisons
25 who are willing to head permanency solution efforts at each
26 organization. Each liaison shall have both of the following
27 duties:

28 (1) To establish within the faith-based institution or nonprofit
29 organization a support network for parents and relatives of at-risk
30 foster clients eligible for permanency, for the purpose of
31 reunification or relative adoption.

32 (2) To administer a recruitment program in the faith-based
33 institution or nonprofit organization to identify individuals who
34 can provide permanency solutions for at-risk foster clients, such
35 as ~~nonrelative guardianship or adoption.~~ *as nonrelative*
36 *guardianship, lifelong connections, or adoption.*

37 (d) For purposes of this chapter, “at-risk foster clients” include
38 all of the following:

39 ~~(1) Foster clients with disabilities.~~

40 ~~(2) Sibling groups of three or more foster clients.~~

- 1 ~~(3) Foster clients over the age of 13 years.~~
- 2 ~~(4) African-American foster clients.~~
- 3 (1) *African-American foster clients.*
- 4 (2) *Foster clients with disabilities.*
- 5 (3) *Sibling groups of three or more foster clients.*
- 6 (4) *Foster clients over the age of 13 years.*
- 7 (5) *Other at-risk foster clients, as may be determined by the*
- 8 *county.*

9 (e) *To the extent permitted by law, resources available*
 10 *pursuant to this chapter shall be prioritized to first serve foster*
 11 *care clients of African-American descent.*

12 ~~(e)~~
 13 (f) *At the end of the pilot program, the county department shall*
 14 *submit to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the State*
 15 *Department of Social Services, and other county departments of*
 16 *human services, a report evaluating the pilot program.*

17 18986.71. *The county shall exercise reasonable and prudent*
 18 *judgment in selecting faith-based institutions and nonprofit*
 19 *organizations to participate in the pilot program, consistent with*
 20 *the objectives of this chapter and existing nondiscrimination laws*
 21 *and policies.*

22 18986.72. *This chapter shall become inoperative on July 1,*
 23 *2008, and, as of January 1, 2009, is repealed, unless a later*
 24 *enacted statute, that becomes operative on or before January 1,*
 25 *2009, deletes or extends the dates on which it becomes*
 26 *inoperative and is repealed.*

27 SEC. 2. *The sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000)*
 28 *is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State*
 29 *Department of Social Services for allocation to the Placer County*
 30 *Department of Health and Human Services for the 2007–08 fiscal*
 31 *year, for the purpose of implementing the pilot program provided*
 32 *for pursuant to Chapter 12.97 (commencing with Section*
 33 *18986.70) of Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions*
 34 *Code.*

35 SEC. 3. *Due to the unique circumstances in Placer County*
 36 *with respect to foster care, it is necessary that, and the*
 37 *Legislature finds and declares that, a general statute cannot be*

- 1 made applicable within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV
- 2 of the California Constitution.

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