

June 11, 2015

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor, State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Foster Parent and Kinship Recruitment, Retention and Support

Dear Governor Brown:

[Organization or individual] requests your support of our local foster parents and kin caregivers by retaining the funding adopted by the Legislature that provides \$27.8 million State General Funds for Foster Parent and Kinship Recruitment, Retention and Support in the State budget. Our organization works with our county child welfare agency to provide supportive, loving homes for children in the foster care system, and we see great need for additional homes in our county.

Relatives and foster parents are the cornerstone of the foster care system. Our families open their homes and their hearts to children who are abused, neglected and come with traumatic life experiences. These children need daily love, care and support to help them overcome their trauma and thrive. Support to foster parents, and to the children in their care, is therefore essential. The basic rate paid to foster parents does not cover activities that can help a child to feel normal and connect with their peers, which can be an important coping mechanism. This includes participation in sports, prom, arts, music and other enrichment activities. Other critical supports needed by foster parents include respite care, child care for working families, foster and kin mentors, and additional training, just to name a few.

The additional \$27.8 million will help counties to recruit, retain and support family caregivers who can provide stable, loving and potentially permanent homes for foster children and will improve their outcomes. We all share this important role of caring for our state's foster children. For this reason, we urge your support.

Sincerely,

Name

Title & County where you are a foster parent/relative

cc: County Welfare Directors Association of California