

PRESS RELEASE

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Gipson Proposes $22.7 Million to Help At-Risk Foster Youth

Budget request would fund community-based solutions to end the criminalization of vulnerable youth

SACRAMENTO, Calif --- Today, Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson (D-Carson) released the following statement regarding his budget proposal to support foster youth:

"Too many vulnerable foster youth have been arrested by law enforcement for low-level offenses, with a disproportionate number who are children of color, girls, LGBTQ youth, and youth with disabilities. In the 2016 annual report on dual status youth in Los Angeles, almost 40% of foster youth who crossed over into the delinquency system were residing in group care at the time of referral. This pipeline to the justice system is unacceptable," said Asm. Gipson. "This budget asks for a $7,575,000 million allocation every year for three years to support community-based programs for foster youth who are criminalized for low-level offenses or are at risk of falling into the juvenile justice system. My budget proposal bolsters community-based organizations to provide trauma-informed training to group home shelter staff and law enforcement, as well as community services focused on promoting health and youth development."

"We restrict our foster youth's social and emotional development by pushing children into detention and secure placements. Imagine if these young children instead had more access to cultural centers, arts programs, and extracurricular activities. Civic engagement, mentorship, and mental health mindfulness can transform how our foster youth view themselves and their futures. This budget proposal provides everyone who is responsible for our foster youth alternatives that uplift and encourage the youth rather than use juvenile hall as a time out," said Asm. Gipson.

This budget request is sponsored by the National Center for Youth Law and supported by numerous youth advocacy organizations including Children Now, Juvenile Law Center, John Burton Advocates for Youth, and Fathers and Families of San Joaquin, among others. This proposal will be heard in Assembly Budget Subcommittee #1 later today and Senate Budget Subcommittee #3 tomorrow.

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