



AB 1520 – Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty

SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 1520, the Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Act, commits the Legislature to a goal of reducing child poverty by 50 percent over 20 years, and provides a framework of research-backed solutions to achieve it.

BACKGROUND

California has the highest rate of child poverty in the nation according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure that accounts for the high cost of living in our state. That translates to one in five children or 1.9 million; and almost one-third of African American children and one-third of Latino children live in poverty.

Efforts to invest in measures to reduce child poverty have been hampered by a lack of sustained focus and a defined, comprehensive plan for addressing the problem. AB 1520 addresses child poverty through the adoption of a framework for continued investment in programs and approaches that have been proven to impact poverty in the most cost-effective ways.

AB 1520 proposes to establish a permanent framework, within the annual budget, that would ensure investment and accountability on programs that have shown a reduction of poverty. In other words, it is building on initiatives already being implemented. In addition, AB 1520 provides for specific accountability measures that will ensure policymakers are able to determine budget priorities based on data collected by the agencies implementing safety-net programs.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1520

AB 1520 establishes a permanent framework through the state budget process, which requires the Legislature to invest in programs that have been proven to significantly reduce child poverty.

Among the areas and programs, for which expenditures will be considered as having met the mandate for investing in the reduction of child poverty, include, but are not limited to:

- Child care and early childhood education
- Home visiting programs
- After school and summer school programs
- Work force development
- Medi-Cal expansion
- Affordable housing
- EITC expansion
- CalWORKS increases
- Investment in Promise Zones

Expert analysis finds that over time, this approach will save taxpayers money in healthcare, social services, reduce overcrowded jails and prisons, decrease child abuse, and cut the number of children living in poverty by 50 percent. Experts estimate an over 2:1 return on investment. The bill would require the creation of a task force that in conjunction with the Legislative Analyst's Office would monitor and measure progress by producing annual reports analyzing how the proposed state budget will impact the child poverty rate. In addition, the Legislature will be required to hold hearings on California's progress to reduce child poverty every two years.

SUPPORT

- GRACE (sponsor)
- California Legislative Black Caucus
- St. John's Well Child & Family Center
- Public Counsel
- SHIELDS for families
- Children Now
- Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
- Youth Policy Institute, Los Angeles PROMISE Neighborhood
- University of Southern California
- National Foster Youth Institute
- Los Angeles Urban League
- South Bay Universal Child Development Center
- One For All (OFA)
- St. Joseph Center Planting Hope & Growing Lives
- South Bay Community Services
- Moneta Gardens Community Center
- Venice Community Housing –Linda Lucks
- Social Justice Learning Institute
- First AME Church of Los Angeles
- Golden State Opportunity
- First Focus Campaign for Children
- Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California
- California State Parent Teacher Association
- Bonnie M. Dumanis San Diego County District Attorney
- California Catholic Conference Inc.
- First 5 California
- California Alternative Payment Program Association
- Alameda County Board of Supervisors
- Junior Leagues of California State Public Affairs Committee
- California Health Advocates
- National Association of Social Workers – CA Chapter
- Health Access California

- First 5 LA –Giving kids the best start
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Health Officers Association of California
- Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California
- Mission: Readiness California
- Ready Nation California
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU 721)
- Board of Supervisors County of Los Angeles

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