

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER
AND SUPERVISOR HILDA SOLIS**

AUGUST 8, 2017

SUPPORTING SB 12: FOSTER YOUTH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Government leaders, child welfare advocates and key stakeholders continue to work toward improving outcomes for youth who age out of the foster care system. However, hurdles still prevent an equitable number of foster youth from completing post-secondary education as compared with their peers.

One of the significant barriers for foster youth is a lack of access to financial aid. Unfortunately, many foster youth are entitled to financial aid but are not informed about their accessibility and lack any assistance or guidance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms.

A 2015 study of foster youth attending community college found that even though almost all foster youth qualify, only half received the Federal Pell Grant. Knowing that financial aid is a strong predictor of degree attainment among foster youth, it is critical that foster youth understand the resources available to them when deciding if they can and should pursue post-secondary education.

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SOLIS _____

KUEHL _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

Senate Bill 12, authored by California State Senator Jim Beall (D), seeks to improve post-secondary achievement among foster youth by increasing the rate of financial aid awards, providing assistance with completing necessary forms and documents, and increasing access to on-campus support.

Specifically, the three key provisions of SB 12 include:

- A requirement for each county child welfare agency to identify a representative to assist foster youth with applications for postsecondary education and financial aid;
- Streamline the financial aid verification process for foster youth who apply through Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and
- Expand an existing on-campus based support program from 10 to 20 community college districts, thereby enabling foster youth to receive the support they need to succeed.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors send a five-signature letter to the Governor and the County's State legislative delegation in support of Senate Bill 12 to help improve post-secondary educational attainment among foster youth.

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KB:mvj