

MOTION BY MAYOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

December 7, 2010

**ESTABLISHING YOUTH SELF-SUFFICIENCY AS A COUNTYWIDE GOAL**

As of 2003, reforms to the County’s child welfare systems of care concentrated on improving outcomes in the three areas of safety, permanency and reducing reliance on out-of-home care. Through comprehensive programmatic and fiscal planning, followed by implementation of innovative service strategies, the Departments of Children and Family Services and Probation respectively achieved positive outcomes for children, youth and families, both upon entry and while being served by their systems.

Yet one reality remains unchanged. Despite our best efforts to reunify or achieve permanency for all children and youth, to date, the County continues to be the parent to approximately 1,800 youth who annually age-out of care. The outlook for these youth remains bleak. National research shows that when youth exit care at or about age 18, half of them are unemployed; one-third are dependent on public assistance; a quarter are incarcerated; and over a fifth are homeless. These unacceptable statistics are a **call to action**. The September 2010 passage of Assembly Bill 12 (Beall/Bass), which takes effect in January 2012 and extends voluntary foster care services to youth between the ages of 18 and 21, makes it even more imperative for the County to begin strategically planning improved support for these youth now.

On my March 2010 motion, this Board addressed the needs of youth aging-out without permanency by unanimously adding a fourth child welfare outcome goal of “self-sufficiency” to the three outcome goals named above. Given that **no County department can effectively serve a youth in isolation**, the motion directed the Chief Executive Officer to convene a workgroup of diverse partners and stakeholders to plan integration of youth self-sufficiency services. Through its ongoing extraordinary commitment and dedication, this workgroup of County departments, commissions, children’s advocates, non-profit providers, philanthropy and former foster youth, created a shared vision and developed a sound foundation, upon which to structure a Countywide integrated youth self-sufficiency service delivery protocol.

M O R E

MOTION

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

## ESTABLISHING YOUTH SELF-SUFFICIENCY AS A COUNTYWIDE GOAL

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The foundation asserts that, in order to become truly self-sufficient and productive adults, youth must attain success in the outcome areas of (1) permanency/housing; (2) social and emotional well-being; (3) education; and (4) career/workforce readiness **before exiting care**. The building blocks for success in these areas begin at birth; and County service delivery must begin addressing each of these areas as soon as a child enters our system. Therefore, all "child and/or youth-serving" County departments must acknowledge, execute and be accountable for their unique and joint roles/responsibilities within the integrated youth self-sufficiency service delivery system. Moreover, County departments and community partners must define or redefine their unique and joint roles/responsibilities within each of the four outcome areas; and achieve cost efficiencies by streamlining redundancies in order to collectively serve the County's children and youth as effectively as possible.

Through alignment and integration of existing resources; and cooperation and collaboration by and between internal and external child welfare partners and stakeholders, "Youth Self-Sufficiency" becomes a Countywide Goal. In so doing, we can significantly improve the statistics quoted above for Los Angeles County's youth, thus enabling them to become successful and productive adult members of society.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors establishes "Youth Self-Sufficiency" as a Countywide goal; and directs the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Departments of Children and Family Services, Probation, Mental Health, Public Social Services, Community and Senior Services, the Community Development Commission and all other "child and/or youth-serving" departments, to report back in 60 days on:

- (1) A recommended conceptual plan for Countywide integrated youth self-sufficiency service delivery, from birth to age 21, which incorporates the outcome areas of permanency/housing; social and emotional well-being; education; and career/workforce readiness. The plan should include, but not be limited to:
  - (a) identified unique and joint roles/responsibilities for relevant County departments and community partners; and
  - (b) suggested inter-departmental policies/procedures/best practices and administrative measures to track and ensure accountability towards achieving measurable progress in the four self-sufficiency outcome areas;
- (2) Recommendations for pilots to test the merits of integrated self-sufficiency service delivery, to include qualitative/quantitative evaluations of results against existing baseline data;
- (3) A strategic planning process for Los Angeles County's AB 12 protocols, with a timeline for implementation by January 2012; and
- (4) Identification of opportunities to leverage and integrate existing funding; and exploration and interpretation of new/forthcoming federal and state revenues that will support Countywide implementation of successful integrated youth self-sufficiency service delivery innovations.