

June 06, 2023

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH**

**Support for SB 407 (Wiener): LGBTQ Foster Youth Protections**

Approximately 30% of foster youth in California identify as LGBTQ. By almost every measure, LGBTQ youth in the foster care system have worse outcomes than their straight counterparts. According to a 2021 Trevor Project study, LGBTQ youth who reported having been in foster care had three times greater odds of reporting a past-year suicide attempt compared to those who had not. Among LGBTQ youth with a history of foster care, those who reported attending an LGBTQ-affirming school had more than 50% lower odds of reporting a past-year suicide attempt compared to those who attended a school that was not LGBTQ-affirming and also had nearly four times greater odds of being kicked out, abandoned, or running away due to treatment based on their LGBTQ identity compared to those who were never in foster care.

In 2019, California passed AB 175 (Gipson), which expanded the foster youth bill of rights to include rights to be referred to by the youth's preferred name and pronoun and maintain privacy of the child's sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Existing rights also include the right to have caregivers and child welfare personnel that have received instruction on cultural competency and best practices for providing care for LGBTQ youth in out-of-home care. However, while the foster youth bill of rights is strong, it has not translated into the resource family approval (RFA) process or into considerations made when approving caregivers. LGBTQ foster

MOTION

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

MITCHELL \_\_\_\_\_

HORVATH \_\_\_\_\_

BARGER \_\_\_\_\_

HAHN \_\_\_\_\_

youth are still being placed in homes with families that discriminate against or are hostile toward them based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Per ACLU data, over 420 pieces of anti-LGBTQ legislation have been introduced in the United States. At a time when rights are under attack, California should be doing everything it can to protect the rights of this community.

To maximize the opportunity for LGBTQ foster youth to succeed, we need to ensure they are placed in homes that support them. SB 407 makes common sense reforms to the state's RFA process to ensure LGBTQ youth are protected, specifically, it will require a resource family to demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of a child, regardless of the child's sexual orientation or gender identity. By doing so, SB 407 will reduce placement instability and increase affirming care for LGBTQ youth with greater consideration and evaluation of needs during the resource family approval process.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the following:

1. Instruct the Chief Executive Office - Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch to support Senate Bill 407 (Wiener), which would strengthen the resource family approval process for LGBTQ foster youth.
2. Direct the County's Sacramento advocates to take the appropriate legislative advocacy actions to advance this effort.

**# # #**