AGN. NO

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL November 10, 2026

Increasing Access to Mobility for Youth and Families and Realizing Cost Savings Through Partnership with LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Los Angeles County (County) Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) works hand-in-hand with youth and families across the County and provides essential safety-net services, including to foster youth, transition-age youth, parents, resource parents, relative caregivers, and guardians. As part of DCFS's ongoing case management and monthly contact with youth and caregivers, Children's Social Workers (CSW) assess and respond to a range of needs that support the safety, well-being, stability, and permanency of children and youth. Transportation is an important component of this work, helping youth and caregivers access required and supportive services, including family visitation, medical and behavioral health appointments, educational activities, court-related obligations, and other activities identified in a youth's case plan or otherwise necessary to support family stability.

Currently, DCFS purchases stored-value transit passes directly from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) for eligible youth and caregivers who require public transportation assistance. These transit passes are provided through DCFS's ongoing case management. In total, DCFS spends approximately $1.5 million annually on transit passes for youth and families.

There is potential for DCFS to realize significant cost savings by partnering with

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Metro to identify and enroll eligible youth and caregivers in Metro's existing free-and-reduced fare programs, including Metro's GoPass and LIFE programs, rather than continuing to purchase stored-value passes on a monthly basis,

Metro's GoPass program offers up to 15 months of unlimited rides on Metro and 18 partner transit agencies across the County for eligible students enrolled in participating K-12 schools, adult schools, and community colleges. Currently, 14 school districts, charter networks, and private schools participate in GoPass, including Los Angeles Unified School District, Pasadena Unified School District, Long Beach Unified School District, and Montebello Unified School District, among others, as well as Community College Districts in Los Angeles, Cerritos, Santa Monica, and more. Any DCFS-involved youth enrolled in a school district, community college, or school participating in GoPass is eligible to ride for free on Metro and its partner agencies.

This raises the possibility that DCFS is currently double-paying for transit by purchasing stored-value Metro transit passes for youth who are already eligible for the GoPass program through their school. Metro can collaborate with DCFS to develop a process that allows CSW's to facilitate the enrollment of eligible youth in GoPass during regularly scheduled meetings, while preserving DCFS-funded transportation assistance for individuals whose transportation needs are not met through GoPass.

Metro's LIFE Program provides 20 free rides every month on Metro and 16 other participating transit agencies across the County, plus 90 days of free rides upon signing up, for income-qualified riders. Residents in households under specified income limits, or those who receive benefits such as Electronic Benefit Transfer, Medi-Cal or Supplementary Security Income, or who participate in other qualifying programs, are eligible for LIFE. Enrolling guardians in LIFE would provide access to a greater number of rides than many currently receive through the existing stored-value cards, and would enroll them in an automatically recurring monthly benefit after the initial 90-day period of unlimited rides.

This approach can reduce duplicative expenditures, increase awareness and utilization of existing public transportation benefits, and help ensure that youth and caregivers have reliable transportation to maintain connections with family, school, employment, health services, and other supports.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Interim Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), in coordination with the Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), or their designee, to:
    a. Conduct an assessment of youth currently receiving agency-funded transit passes and identify opportunities to transition eligible individuals to Metro's existing free-and reduced-fare programs, and partner with Metro to develop a system that enables DCFS to enroll eligible youth in the Metro GoPass program and caregivers in the Metro LIFE program. DCFS shall maintain an appropriate DCFS-funded transportation option for those who are not eligible for GoPass or LIFE, or whose transportation needs are not addressed by these programs;
    b. Identify and implement a replacement incentive to sustain monthly engagement by youth who no longer receive stored-value Metro transit passes as an incentive; and
    c. Report back to the Board in writing within 60 days with an implementation timeline, including key milestones developed in partnership with Metro, and proposed metrics to measure success over time, including a plan to track GoPass and LIFE enrollment among DCFS youth, caregivers, and guardians over time.

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(CA/LH/MR)