

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN AND
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Exploring the Creation of a Countywide Youth Advisory Body

According to the American Youth Policy Forum, “Young people are often their own best advocates and their voices can be leveraged to promote pathways to long-term success. Youth advocacy and civic engagement is especially powerful for vulnerable populations, such as youth who are in...foster care, or justice-involved, who can draw upon their own experiences to impact change. This kind of youth organizing can lead to positive policy and practice changes by youth, for youth and helps young people develop important knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions for success in adulthood.”

There are numerous organizations and advocates that work on behalf of young people involved in the foster care and/or juvenile justice systems in Los Angeles County (County). Many of them have established forums for these young people to be heard. However, we believe that the County should have a formal and institutionalized youth advisory body for these young people to help shape County initiatives and policies that impact them.

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Such a “Youth Advisory Body” would be comprised of young people who have been part of the juvenile justice and/or child welfare system, including those who represent marginalized populations such as LGBTQ youth, and they would be tasked with providing valuable insight to the Board of Supervisors, County departments, relevant community-based organizations, and other stakeholders on how to improve our County’s policies and programs for youth and families

WE, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Commission for Children and Families and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), working in consultation with the Probation Department, the Office of Child Protection, the Office of Diversion and Re-Entry, the Departments of Mental Health, Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services and Health Services, the Center for Strategic Partnerships, key organizations serving foster and probation youth, current and former foster and probation youth, and other relevant stakeholders and report back in 120 days on the feasibility of establishing a permanent “Youth Advisory Body” in Los Angeles County.

WE, FURTHER MOVE that the report include:

- 1) An assessment of all current youth engagement strategies (i.e. current youth advisory councils) provided by both our County departments as well as our foster and probation youth serving organizations to determine best practices to work with youth through a “Youth Advisory Body”;
- 2) A recommendation as to where the “Youth Advisory Body” should be housed within the County, including the feasibility of making it a part of the Commission for Children and Families;
- 3) A recommended funding and staffing plan for the “Youth Advisory Body,” to

include input from the Executive Office of the Board, in consultation with the Chief Executive Office;

- 4) Exploration of the feasibility of engaging a consultant to facilitate the development of the “Youth Advisory Body”; and,
- 5) A recommendation by the County Counsel as to how best to compensate youth for any and all work they conduct on behalf of the County, including reimbursement for transportation to and from County meetings.

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JH:mk