

March 29, 2021

The Honorable Phil Ting
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0019

RE: AB-413 (Ting) Foster Youth: Housing
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Ting,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 413, as amended on March 17, 2021. This bill establishes ongoing funding for programs assisting current and former foster youth, who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, with achieving stable housing, and training for social workers and probation officers working with transition-age foster youth to help find housing resources.

Historically, foster youth have experienced high rates of homelessness as they transition out of care. While California has taken strides to address this issue, nearly one in five youth experience homelessness while in foster care between ages 19 to 21, and one in four experience homelessness between ages 21 and 23. For youth accessing our State's Transitional Housing Program (THP-Plus) for former foster youth, the rate is even higher; one in three experience homelessness prior to entering the program. This problem has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with foster youth increasingly experiencing unemployment or reduction in work hours.

A July 2020 survey from the John Burton Advocacy for Youth found that, statewide, a total of 539 youths were on a waiting list for the state's THP-Plus program, which provides up to 24 months of affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services to former foster and probation youth aged 18-24.¹ Demand is greatest in the State's high-cost counties.

AB 413 increases training on homelessness and homelessness-related resources for probation officers and child welfare workers. It also establishes permanent funding for the Housing Navigators Program serving youth age 18-21, as well as the Transitional Housing Program serving youth age 18-24. Both programs prioritize former foster and youth on probation. AB 413 also provides a housing supplement for the THP-Plus program in counties with the highest rental costs.

AAP-CA strongly supports AB 413. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Angela, Dangvu, MD FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://www.jbaforyouth.org/publication-guides/>