



SENATOR DAVE CORTESE

SB 9: Raising the Age for Extended Foster Care Act of 2023

SUMMARY

Sponsored by the California Judges Association, The Raising the Age for Extended Foster Care Act of 2023 aims to give vulnerable qualifying youth the ability to remain in the foster system through the age of 25.

BACKGROUND

AB 12 (Beall, 2010) which extended foster care to the age of 21 allowed eligible youth in the child welfare and probation systems to remain in foster care up to the age of 21. This program is voluntary and allows youth to opt in and out, as they please.

In order to qualify for extend foster care, the youth must meet multiple eligibility requirements outlined in the bill. While AB 12 and the legislative efforts to expand eligibility pre-pandemic was a great stepping-stone to improving youth outcomes, data shows a decline in outcomes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Extending the eligible age of jurisdiction from 21 to 26 will give impacted youth who are not yet ready to transition from the system a wider safety net before becoming independent. Additionally, this will help those young adults successfully transition from foster care to adulthood with additional guidance and assistance.

Data shows that a young person's brain development continues through age 25 and SB 9 will help ease the transition out of the foster care system during this developmental phase. AB 12 has been extremely successful and with the pandemic's impact, this bill will allow many impacted youth the opportunity to successfully transition to independence.

THIS BILL

SB 9 will extend the age of jurisdiction for voluntary extended foster care from age 21 to age 26. It deems eligible foster youth as "nonminor dependents" (NMDs) and allows them to extend their access to payment benefits and transitional support services. A nonminor dependent coming out of both the foster care and juvenile justice systems is eligible to receive extended jurisdiction under this proposal. The bill does not apply any changes to eligibility and participating requirements as outlined in current law.

Ultimately, SB 9 will give qualifying foster youth more time to address the effects of their trauma, make strides towards their education and employment opportunities and accumulate support before transitioning out of the system.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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