



SENATOR ANNA CABALLERO
TWELFTH SENATE DISTRICT

SENATE BILL 298: End Child Poverty Act

SUMMARY

SB 298 would establish specific targets to end deep child poverty in four years and reduce child poverty by 50% in California by 2039. It will also make permanent the Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Taskforce (Taskforce). The Taskforce would be required to submit a report to the Legislature every even numbered year, providing a full fiscal and program analysis of the progress made to meet the targets established by the End Child Poverty Act.

BACKGROUND

California has the highest rate of child poverty in the nation according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure, which accounts for the high cost of living in our state. That translates to one in five children or 1.9 million California children. Almost one-third of African American children and one-third of Latino children in California live in poverty. Of the 1.9 million impoverished children, approximately 450,000 children live in deep poverty or 50% of the Federal Poverty Line (less than \$12,500 per year).

Efforts to reduce child poverty have been hampered by a lack of both sustained focus on the problem and a defined, comprehensive plan for measuring progress.

Recognizing a need for the state to have a comprehensive plan to address child poverty, the Legislature and Governor took a vital step by creating the Taskforce whose main goal was to develop a comprehensive plan with proven, data-driven solutions to significantly reduce California's child poverty rate and eradicate deep poverty with a sunset date of Jan. 2020.

The Taskforce finalized and distributed the plan in November of 2018.

Expert analysis finds that over time, the Taskforce approach will save taxpayers money in healthcare, social services, reduced jail and prison overcrowding, decreased child abuse, and will cut the number of children living in poverty by 50 percent. Experts estimate more than a 2:1 return on investment.

PROBLEM

California does not have a permanent long-term focused mechanism to evaluate progress made in reducing child poverty in California. This has created a system of siloed investments and piecemeal solutions.

SOLUTION

SB 298 will establish a permanent framework that would ensure a continued strategic focus on ending deep child poverty within four years and reducing child poverty by 50% by 2039.

SB 298 establishes specific accountability measures that will allow policymakers to determine budget priorities with data collected by agencies that are implementing programs designed to alleviate poverty.

By permanently establishing the Taskforce and setting specific targets, SB 298 recognizes that addressing child poverty is an issue that requires continued focus, comprehensive study and policy action.

STATUS

Introduced

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