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Betsy Butler

March 22, 2018

Assemblymember Mark Stone
Assembly Committee on Judiciary
Capitol Office Room 3146
P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0059

Re: Support AB 2337 (Gipson) – Extended Foster Care

Dear Assemblymember Stone,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of Assembly Bill 2337, which removes administrative barriers to ensure that foster youth in need of transitional services are able to access the extended foster care program.

In 2012, the extended foster care program gave foster youth the ability to remain in foster care until they turned 21. Many foster youth rely on this program to provide support and services from the ages of 18 to 21. However, unintended administrative hurdles are preventing certain foster youth from being able to access these services.

AB 2337 will address these barriers by allowing a non-minor who has been found in need of temporary foster care and was in that placement on their 18th birthday to be eligible to be formally "declared" a foster youth after turning 18. This bill also allows a foster youth to appeal a juvenile court's dismissal of their dependency petition after their 18th birthday. In addition, AB 2337 ensures foster youth are not delayed in exercising their existing right to re-enter foster care in the event their guardian or adoptive parent ceases to provide support and allows foster youth to petition the court for re-entry in cases where the Adoption Assistance Payment (AAP) or Kinship Guardianship Assistance (Kin-GAP funding) has not yet been terminated by the county.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. AB 2337 will ensure foster youth are able to access the extended foster care program to receive the support and services they need to successfully transition to adulthood.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center supports Assembly Bill 2337.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director