

A GREATER HOPE



Tribal Oak Tree







June 14, 2024

Senator Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O St. (Room 6530)
Sacramento, CA 94578

RE: In strong support of AB 2496 (The Foster Family Agency Accountability Act)

Dear Senator Umberg,

California's foster family system is on the verge of collapse due to imminent loss of insurance for foster family

agencies (FFAs). We know that sometimes mere problems are brought to you and represented as crises. This is not one of those times.

A collapse of California's foster family system will hurt the 9,000 children presently in resource homes. If FFAs lose their insurance coverage and can no longer serve children and families, children across the state will be at risk of losing thousands of caregivers, and counties will experience a severe placement crisis resulting from a lack of safe and stable settings for children.

As California foster family agencies (FFAs) whose mission is to protect these children, we implore you to pass AB 2496, The Foster Family Agency Accountability Act.

FFAs are nonprofit organizations licensed by the Community Care Licensing Division of the California State Department of Social Services to engage in the recruiting, approving, and training of, and providing professional support to, resource parent(s), or in finding homes for placement of children for temporary or permanent care who require that level of care as an alternative to a group home. In their contracts with FFAs, counties require FFAs to carry insurance.

Over the past several years, we have been alarmed as one insurance company after the other has refused to renew our property/casualty insurance policies. Simultaneously, counties have increased insurance requirements and introduced clauses into their contracts which shift their liabilities onto us.

As the insurance market has shrunk, we have come to rely on a state-authorized, nonprofit risk pool called Nonprofits Insurance Alliance of California (NIAC), which insures 12,000 501(c)(3) nonprofits in California — including 90% of California FFAs.

NIAC has successfully insured FFAs for 35 years, and they assure us that FFAs have not become uninsurable because they are less diligent in protecting children, but because of changes to the judicial system, which are now holding FFAs responsible for the negligence and bad acts of others, over which FFAs have no control. NIAC recently made it clear to us that, without the changes provided in AB 2496, they will be forced to issue nonrenewals to all FFAs. This will cause a collapse of California's foster family system.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, NIAC is accountable to all of the nonprofits that rely on it and cannot jeopardize its financial solvency for FFAs that represent less than 10% of its business.

As FFAs, it is our duty and responsibility to take every reasonable step to assure the safety and wellbeing of the children in these resource families. Nothing in AB 2496 will release us from our responsibilities to these children.

Respectfully,

David Channer, A Better Way

Warner Graham, A Better Way Inc

Tatiana Stewart, A Better Way Inc

Anne Grascoeur, A Better Way, Inc.

Sharon Brown, A Better Way, Inc.

David McCoy, A Coming of Age to Adulthood, Inc

Betty Cowley, A Greater Hope

Barbara Pitts, A Greater Hope

Erin Wikert, A Greater Hope

Amanda Bell, A Greater Hope

Tamiko Henderson, A Greater Hope

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Mary Frame, A Greater Hope

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Kathy A Davis, A Greater Hope

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Hannah Hodges , A Greater Hope

Julia Reynaga, A Greater Hope

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Natalie Lopez, A Greater Hope

Annette Reyes, A Greater Hope FFA

Jenna Hepner, A Greater Hope FFA

Rachaelle Newberry, A Greater Hope Foster Family Agency

Marcia Palmer Parkinson, A Greater Hope Foundation

Nicole Ramos, A Greater Hope Foundation for Children

Elizabeth Viramontes, A Greater Love

Dr. Suzette Mohammed, A New Beginning Foster Family Agency

Janet Kleyn, Agape Villages Foster Family Agency

Kerry Ahearn, Aldea

Luigi Grimaldi-Evangelista, Alliance Human Services, Inc.

Saif Amin, Allies For Every Child

Koryn Marshall, Alternative Family Services

Martha Duarte, Alternative Family Services

Marsha Lewis-Akyeem, Alternative Family Services, Inc.

Donny Smoke Adolph , American Indian Child Resource Center

Mary Trimble Norris, American Indian Child Resource Center

Yvette Torres, American Indian Child Resource Center

Carine Wynant , American Indian Child Resource Center

Jeff Wiemann, Angels Foster Family Network

Alice Dorothy, Ark Homes FFA

David K Mathias, Ark Homes Foster Family Agency

Vernon Brown, Aspiranet

Amber Rivas, Aviva Family & Children's Services

Michelle Greenhouse, Bright Horizons FFA

Will Max , Building Bridges

Robert Mathias, Building Bridges Foster Family Agency

Denise Biben, Childhelp

Shannon Pierce, Children First FFA

Sarah Peery, Children's Legacy Center

Ron Brown, Children's Bureau of Southern California

Adam Seiden, Children's Bureau of Southern California

Douglas Yost, Crittenton Services for Children and Families

Daniel S. Maydeck, David & Margaret Home, Inc. Foster Family Agency and Serinity Home, Inc. Foster Family Agency

Barnaby Murff, Extraordinary Families

James M. Schrage, MSW, Families Uniting Families

Jill Jacobs, Family Builders by Adoption

Jonathan nibbio , Family Care Network, inc

Elizabeth Gonzalez, Five Acres

Laura De La Cruz, Five Acres

Kristyn Barney, Five Acres

Erin Brown, FosterHope Sacramento

Teri Amirkhan, Futuro Infantil Hispano, FFA

Lia Andrews, Gracious Heart Resource Family Agency

Joe Lopez, Greater Hope Foundation for Children

Catherine Woody, Greater Hope Foundation for Children, Inc.

Michelle Greenhouse, Greenhouse Family Services

Liz Qaqiesh, Guiding Light

Cristi Avila, Haven Family Services

Mayra Salazar, Hillsides

Sandro Villa, Inner Circle Foster Family Agency, Inc.

Lee Burton, Kamali'i Foster Family Agency

Eric Mortensen, Kamali'i Foster Family Agency, Inc.

Katherine Yeom, KFAM

Jamie Zatarain, Kingdom Kidz

Edward McFiels, Knotts Family Agency

Tiffany Sickler, Koinonia

Laura Richardson, Koinonia Family Services

Maria L Quintanilla, LCSW, Latino Family Institute

Liz Qaqiesh, Litehouse Children & Family Services

Anil Vadaparty , McKinley

Shannon Roberts , New Dimensions Foster Family Agency

marcelo cabrera, New Life FFA

Norma Duque, Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children Services

Kimberly Hammack, On The Rise, Inc.

David Tribbey, Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services

Tony Yadon, Parents by Choice

Charito Guerrero, Penny Lane Centers

Candace Mohammad, Rebuilding Lives

Victoria Kelly, Redwood Community Services

Emily Allison, Seneca Family of Agencies

Maria E. Martinez, Sibling Care, FFA

Laura Heintz, Stanford Sierra Youth & Families

Kelsey, Stanford Sierra Youth & Families

Danielle Paminto, Stanford Sierra Youth & Families

Asia Vacek, Stanford Sierra Youth and Families

Nalee Moua, Stanford Sierra Youth and Families

Roy Hernandez , Sunrise Horizon

Wendy Wang, Sycamores

Zenia Canas, Sycamores

Carrie Mathews, The Heart Matters FFA

Deborah Hoffman, The Village Family Services

Hanieh Fakhoury, There is Hope

Elizabeth Jimenez, TLC Child and Family Services

Susan Fette, MFT, TLC Child and Family Services

Brian Van Anne, MSW, Transitions Children's Services

Kerianne Foxford, Tribal Oak Tree Foster Family Agency

Jackie Jakob, Trinity Youth Services

Cher Ofstedahl, Trinity Youth Services

Andrea Evans, Valley Teen Ranch

Lorraine Romero, Victor Treatment Centers

Kathy A. Davis, LMFT, Victor Treatment Centers, Inc

Lena Wilson, Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services

Karriann Farrell Hinds, Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services

Jay Allen, Wayfinder Family Services

Dawn Vo-Jutabha, Ph.D., Wayfinder Family Services

cc:

Members, Senate Judiciary Committee

Assemblymember Gail Pellerin