



**CWDA**  
Advancing Human Services  
for the Welfare of All Californians

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February 25, 2022

The Honorable Isaac Bryan  
Assembly Member, State of California  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA

**RE: AB 1686 (BRYAN) AS INTRODUCED  
JANUARY 31, 2022 – SPONSOR**

Dear Assembly Member Bryan:

The County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) is proud to SPONSOR your AB 1686, which would clarify referral criteria to child support enforcement for parents whose children are placed into foster care.

Currently, the Department of Child Support Services and local child support agencies are responsible for collecting and enforcing child support obligations, including child support delinquencies. A child welfare department can make a referral for child support collections in certain instances where collection is not a barrier to reunification for children that have been involuntarily separated from their parents.

Families who are supported by public systems are better able to successfully complete the requirements of the dependency court in order to reunify with their children. Conversely, enforcing payment of child support by parents who are financially struggling generally serves to make reunification with their children harder to achieve and can further destabilize the family. Research shows that for every \$100 child welfare-involved parents pay, their child's duration in care lengthens for 6.6 months. The effects are especially pronounced for families of color, who are significantly over-represented in California's child welfare system.

AB 1686 provides clarification of current law, indicating a presumption that a child support referral is likely to pose a barrier to reunification for families engaging in that process. This change effectively narrows the circumstances that would allow child welfare professionals to refer parents to child support enforcement, while keeping California law within the parameters of federal law. As a result, this bill will improve outcomes for foster youth by assisting them in reunifying with their families.

For these reasons, CWDA is pleased to be a SPONSOR of your AB 1686.

Sincerely,

Cathy Senderling McDonald | Executive Director