



# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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**SHEILA KUEHL**

SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT

May 31, 2016

Assembly Member Philip Ting, Chair  
Budget Conference Committee  
State Capitol, Room 3123  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Mark Leno, Vice-Chair  
Budget Conference Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5100  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Ting and Senator Leno:

**Re: Item # 5180 Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children**

As you know, the LA County Board of Supervisors is strongly urging the Budget Conference Committee to adopt the Assembly version of this item which would provide \$11 million in 2016-17 and \$22 million in out-years to increase access to early care and education services for abused and neglected children across our state. This is a particularly important item to me.

Our County child welfare agencies rely heavily on the commitment of resource families to provide children with safe and loving homes during their times of crisis. Unfortunately, many of our otherwise willing resource parents are truly unable to provide homes for foster children because they lack access to child care. The barrier to child care is a result of the "timing gap." When children are removed, they are in crisis, and prospective resource parents – often relatives – instantly need to access child care in order to take them in. Unfortunately, child care programs typically operate at full capacity. They sign up children during short enrollment windows that rarely align with a child's placement into foster care, making it impossible for caregivers who work to take in young children. The proposal I am writing to support, known as the emergency "bridge" child care program, addresses this problem so that children can be promptly placed and stabilized with loving relatives or in other loving homes.

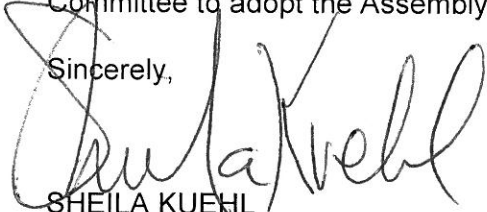
The Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children would provide a child care voucher for resource families with foster children, as well as for parenting foster youth. This program would help to immediately stabilize vulnerable children and provide them with a bridge to long-term, high quality early education programs.

The success of the Continuum of Care Reform depends heavily on increased recruitment and support of resource families. Unfortunately, some counties have experienced a significant decline in the number of available foster families. In Los Angeles County alone, state-licensed homes have declined by over half, from more than 8,000 in 2005 to fewer than 4,000 in 2015. The child welfare system cannot succeed in its mission to provide loving foster homes for our

most vulnerable children unless this barrier to recruiting caregivers is addressed. In addition, we know that, for all the benefits that high quality child care has for young children, the impact can be even more dramatically positive for children who have experienced the trauma of abuse, neglect and removal from their homes.

I strongly believe that this proposal is very important and urge the Budget Conference Committee to adopt the Assembly version.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheila Kuehl', written in a cursive style.

SHEILA KUEHL  
Supervisor, Third District

GC:ea