

[INSERT date]

The Honorable (insert legislator's first name and last name)
California State (insert "Assembly" or "Senate" as appropriate)
(insert legislator's local District address)
(insert "City, State and zip code")

RE: Support to children and resource families provided by Foster Family Agency (FFA) Social Workers

Dear (insert "Assembly Member" or "Senator") (insert last name):

I am writing to urge you to support a \$26.7 million budget allocation to address the impact of State mandated minimum wage increases on the salaries of highly educated and skilled social workers employed by nonprofit Foster Family Agencies (FFA) who care for our foster youth; ensuring their safety, increasing placement stability, and speeding permanency.

As a State legislator, you have a special responsibility to provide adequate financial support for the children and youth who come into foster care having suffered the trauma of being removed from their homes as well as from the abuse or neglect that led to their removal. Many have significant emotional and behavioral challenges and they depend on their FFA social worker to offer compassionate support and needed services.

[Include a sentence or two about the supports and services you provide to your resource families and foster children. Feel free to use "Comments Template" for ideas.]

I am employed as a social worker by (***Insert Name of Agency***). My fellow social workers and I are required by law and by our scope of practice to have a Master's degree. It's a challenging job and I love it, just as I love the kids and families I work with.

(***Insert Name of Agency***) has done everything possible to compensate its social workers fairly, but can only do so much when the amount for social work salaries built into the current State-set FFA rate does not receive an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Now, (***Insert Name of Agency***) finds that it cannot comply with the effects of the State mandated Minimum Wage Law. I have seen many fellow social workers leave for social work jobs with government, hospitals or in the education sector, jobs that offer higher pay and benefits, in order to better support their own families.

Children and youth placed in foster care with FFAs need social work support in order to thrive; foster caregivers need support and services to hang in when times get tough. I am asking you to support a \$26.7 million budget allocation to bring FFA social worker salaries into compliance with the new State Minimum Wage Law, as well as to support the implementation of the State's Continuum of Care Reform.

Sincerely,

[INSERT Signature]

[INSERT Your Full Name and Title]

[INSERT The FFA Address]

[INSERT Your Cell Phone if you wish]