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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair  
2015 - 2016 Regular

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**Bill No:** AB 1228  
**Author:** Gipson  
**Version:** February 27, 2015  
**Urgency:** No  
**Consultant:** Lynn Lorber  
**Hearing Date:** June 24, 2015  
**Fiscal:** Yes

**Subject:** Public postsecondary education: campus housing: priority for homeless youth

## SUMMARY

This bill extends priority for housing at the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges to homeless youth, and requests campuses to develop plans to ensure that homeless and foster youth have housing during breaks.

## BACKGROUND

Existing federal law, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, defines homeless individuals as an individual or family:

- 1) Who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- 2) With a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.
- 3) Living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing).
- 4) Will imminently lose their housing, including housing they own, rent, or live in without paying rent, are sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels not paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations; has no subsequent residence identified; and lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.
- 5) Unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes. (United States Code, Title 42, § 11302)

Existing state law:

- 1) Requires campuses of the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC), to the extent the Regents of the UC adopt a resolution making this requirement applicable, and requests campuses of the California Community Colleges (CCC), in order to ensure current and former foster youth have stable housing, to give priority for housing these students. (Education Code § 76010, § 90001.5, and § 92660)
- 2) Requires campuses of the CSU and UC, and requests campuses of the CCC, that maintain student housing facilities open for occupation during school breaks, or on a year-round basis, to give first priority to current and former foster youth for residence in the housing facilities that are open for uninterrupted year-round occupation. (EC § 76010, § 90001.5, and § 92660)
- 3) Requests the UC Regents and the CSU Trustees to explore methods of using the admissions-by-exemption category to assist the transition of students in foster care into four-year public institutions of higher education. (EC § 66019.3)

## ANALYSIS

This bill extends priority for housing at the UC, the CSU, and the CCCs to homeless youth, and requests campuses to develop plans to ensure that *homeless and foster youth* have housing during breaks. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires campuses of the CSU and UC, to the extent the Regents of the UC adopt a resolution making this requirement applicable, and requests campuses of the CCC, in order to ensure current and former homeless youth have stable housing, to give priority for housing these students.
- 2) Requires campuses of the CSU and UC, and requests campuses of the CCC, that maintain student housing facilities open for occupation during school breaks, or on a year-round basis, to give first priority to current and former homeless youth for residence in the housing facilities that are open for uninterrupted year-round occupation.
- 3) Requires campuses of the CSU and UC, and requests campuses of the CCC, to provide this housing to current and former *homeless and foster youth* at no extra cost during the academic or campus breaks, and next give priority to current and former homeless youth for housing that is open for occupation during the most days in the calendar year.
- 4) Requests campuses of the CSU, UC, and CCC to develop a plan to ensure that current and former *homeless and foster youth* can access housing resources as needed during and between academic terms, including during academic and campus breaks.

- 5) Defines "homeless youth" to mean a student under 25 years of age, who has been verified as a homeless child or youth at any time during the prior six years, by at least one of the following:
  - a) A homeless services provider, as defined by the Health and Safety Code.
  - b) The director, or his or her designee, of a federal TRIO program or a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) program.
  - c) A financial aid administrator.
- 6) Requests the Regents of the University of California (UC) and the Trustees of the California State University (CSU) to explore methods of using the admissions-by-exemption category to assist the transition of students who are homeless into four-year public institutions of higher education.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "A report by the California Homeless Youth Project, *More than a Roof: How California Can End Youth Homelessness*, demonstrates that educational attainment is a key determinant of whether homeless and foster youth thrive as self-sufficient adults. Unfortunately, homeless and foster youth face a myriad of challenges impeding their educational success. For those that do access higher education, challenges follow them to university campuses. In addition to lacking parental and financial support, many live in vehicles or shelters. Ensuring that their basic housing needs are met will help them focus on their education, improving graduation rates and self-sufficiency."
- 2) ***Existing resources for students who are homeless.*** According to the Assembly Higher Education Committee analysis, campuses of the UC work with current and former homeless students by providing them with emergency financial support, temporary housing, food, and connecting them with community resources. Each campus has case managers or social workers in place to work with these students and assist in their transition. Additionally, UC at Los Angeles (UCLA) administers a program focused on assisting current and former homeless youth that has received nationwide attention. UCLA's program provides food vouchers and free stays in vacant dormitory rooms to its homeless students. Many CSU campuses have community partnerships with local entities in order to provide necessary services and needs for current and former homeless students. Of the 112 California Community College (CCC) campuses, 11 provide student apartments and/or dormitory rooms that are either on campus or adjacent to the campus. Currently, there is no known explicit policy of the UC, CSU or CCC ensuring current and former homeless youth have priority in receiving campus housing.
- 3) ***Admissions-by-exemption.*** Existing law requests the Regents of the UC and the Trustees of the CSU to explore methods of using the admissions-by-exemption category to assist the transition of students who are in foster care into four-year public institutions of higher education. This bill extends that request to include

students who are homeless. The University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) may admit students pursuant to admissions-by-exception, whereby a student who is not academically eligible may be admitted based upon demonstration of potential for success.

- 4) **TRIO and GEAR UP.** This bill defines a homeless youth to include youth under age 25 who have been identified by the director, or his or her designee, of a federal TRIO or GEAR UP program.

The federal TRIO programs are outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income students, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs.

GEAR UP is a federal grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

- 5) **Fiscal impact.** According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, any costs to campuses of the CSU, UC and California Community College (CCC) will be minor and absorbable.
- 6) **Related legislation.** AB 801 (Bloom, 2015) enacts the Success for Homeless Youth in Higher Education Act, which, among other things, requires the CSU and CCC, and requests the UC, to extend priority enrollment to current and former homeless youth. AB 801 is pending in this Committee.

## SUPPORT

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
 Aspiranet  
 California Coalition for Youth  
 California Federation of Teachers  
 California State Student Association  
 County Welfare Directors Association of California  
 Housing California  
 John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes  
 Junior League of California, State Public Affairs Committee  
 Junior League of Orange County  
 League of California Cities  
 National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter  
 National Center for Youth Law  
 Public Counsel  
 University of California Student Association

**OPPOSITION**

None received.

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