

California State Budget Invests in Reducing Homelessness for Youth and Young Adults

Budget Includes Three Proposals Championed by John Burton Advocates for Youth

June 27, 2019

Today, Governor Gavin Newsom signed the California State Budget for 2019-20, which includes three proposals championed by John Burton Advocates for Youth.

First-Ever Funding for Homeless College Students

The first proposal included in the State Budget is a \$19 million annual investment to address homelessness among college students, the first-ever in the State of California. According to a [2019 study](#), 1 in 5 students in the California Community College system experience homelessness over a 12-month period; for students in the California State University system, the figure is 1 in 10. The same study found that foster youth are the most likely to have experienced homelessness: 41% of students at two-year colleges and 27% at four-year institutions.

The \$19 million annual investment will provide \$9 million to the California Community College system, \$6.5 million to the California State University system, and \$3.5 million to the University of California system. Campuses are required to use the funding to establish partnerships with local organizations with a demonstrated track record of helping individuals experiencing homelessness. These organizations will provide wraparound services and rental subsidies to students experiencing homelessness.

\$8 Million to Address Homelessness Among Former Foster Youth

The second proposal included in the State Budget is an \$8 million annual investment in addressing homelessness among transition-age youth in California. The funding will be distributed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development to counties and requires that youth formerly in foster care and the juvenile probation system are prioritized. The level of funding received by each county will be determined this summer.

The proposal was developed in response to the growing issue of homelessness among youth and young adults, particularly former foster youth: 1 in 3 youth who exit foster care will experience homelessness within 24 months.

According to Xavier Mountain, a youth advocate at John Burton Advocates for Youth and a former foster youth, expanding access to safe, affordable housing is critical to help foster youth make a safe, supported transition: “As an emancipated foster youth, I lacked the proper guidance, credit, and finances to secure my own apartment. Without these types of housing programs, my options would have been limited to homelessness and couch surfing. With this funding expansion, we’re taking an important step toward ending homelessness.”

\$52 Million to Reduce Youth Homelessness

The third proposal backed by John Burton Advocates for Youth and included in the State Budget is a \$52 million investment in preventing and addressing youth homelessness. According to a 2018 study led by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, 1 in 30 youth ages 13 to 17

experience homelessness over the course of 12 months; the rate is higher for young adults ages 18 to 24: 1 in 10.

The \$52 million investment is part of a \$650 million package of assistance provided by the state to local jurisdictions. According to Executive Director Amy Lemley, the inclusion of homeless youth in this package is a big step forward. “This is the second year California has identified homeless youth as a population of particular concern,” said Lemley. “Thank you to Governor Gavin Newsom and the California State Legislature for recognizing the needs of homeless youth.”

Alexis Barries, a youth advocate at John Burton Advocates for Youth and formerly homeless youth agrees. “I’m glad to see this change,” said Alexis, emphasizing that most people have no idea about the reality of being a homeless young person. “While people were looking forward to 5:00 PM, because it would be the end of a work day, I dreaded it, because it would mean a night of living in my car.”

Acknowledgements

John Burton Advocates for Youth would like to express gratitude to the individuals and organizations with whom we worked to make these achievements possible. Thank you to the California State Legislature, namely Senator Anthony Portantino, Senator Scott Wiener and Assembly Member Phil Ting, for their leadership in these key proposals, together with the Administration of Governor Gavin Newsom.

Thank you also to the many public agencies, campuses, nonprofit organizations, and current and former foster youth who worked closely with John Burton Advocates for Youth to make the case for these important investments, namely the California State University Students Association, the UC Students Association, California Coalition for Youth, Housing California, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and Equality California.

Thank you also to the generous foundation supporters of John Burton Advocates for Youth, namely the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the Pritzker Foster Care Initiative, the May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust, the California Wellness Foundation, the Ticket to Dream Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, the Tipping Point Community, the Johnny Carson Foundation, and the Angell Foundation.

About John Burton Advocates for Youth

John Burton Advocates for Youth is a statewide non-profit organization based in San Francisco, working to improve the quality of life for California’s foster, former foster, and homeless youth through the development of policy advocacy, collaboration, and capacity building. It was founded in 2005 by progressive champion John Burton, a former member of Congress, the California State Assembly, and President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate. For more information, please visit www.jbaforyouth.org or contact Executive Director Amy Lemley at Amy@jbay.org.