

CITY COUNCIL

Darryl Moore Councilmember District 2

CONSENT CALENDAR April 29, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Darryl Moore, District 2

Councilmember Laurie Capitelli, District 5 Councilmember Gordon Wozniak, District 8

Subject: Supporting Assembly Bill 2591, the Basic Material Needs for Homeless

Children Act

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution supporting Assembly Bill 2591, the Basic Material Needs for Homeless Children Act. The City Clerk is to send a copy of the Council action with the resolution to Assemblymembers Shirley Weber, Nancy Skinner, the Speaker of the Assembly, Senator Loni Hancock, and Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg.

BACKGROUND

There are 250,000 homeless K-12 children and youth identified in California public schools. This includes those living in motels, shelters, cars, garages and those without permanent fixed addresses (as defined by the US McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act). Based on government data, and substantial academic research, we can conclude that homeless children are performing worse in school and are at a higher risk of poor outcomes (incarceration, truancy, etc.) due in part to a lack of basic materials.

Although there is a small federal subgrant program to, in part, boost homeless liaison staffing levels in some local education agencies (LEAs), the state provides no financial resources to social service agencies or LEAs to provide basic needs material assistance for homeless children and youth. Some counties with both the political leadership and financial resources are able to partially or fully allocate resources, they are the exception, not the standard. California needs a state policy with adequate funding that will enable all homeless children and youth to get the basic materials they need to learn and grow.

Following this model, under the proposed legislation social service agencies would contract with community benefit organizations (CBO) to provide materials to homeless and other low-income children and youth. This partnership would have the condition of a match, which the CBO could leverage through partnering manufacturers and/or corporations. The CBOs would then enter into MOUs with each county's LEAs, who

would receive the materials at no cost, provided they distribute in a systematic and auditable manner.

This model was originally initiated with funding from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund, but has since utilized several other resources where available.

AB 2591, the Basic Materials Needs for Homeless Children and Youth Act, is intended to establish a state policy that will enable social services to provide basic material needs for McKinney-Vento (homeless) children identified in public schools. It will provide funding to the California Department of Social Services and their respective county agencies for contracting with CBOs to distribute tangible resources to children identified as homeless under the U.S. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (education code: 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.). The Act also requires local education agencies (LEA) and Head Start agencies to have one or several homeless liaisons to identify, track and distribute goods and services to this population.

The cost to *fully* address the materials needs of homeless children is \$80 per child or \$20 million dollars based on 2012 numbers, although *any investment towards this goal would be a step forward*. Because the materials will be distributed through LEAs' McKinney-Vento liaisons, school supplies would be prioritized. The liaisons will suggest additional materials needed by homeless children. To better define the basic material needs of homeless children and youth, LEAs are surveying homeless liaisons in 200 school districts to determine the greatest needs.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION Unknown

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Darryl Moore, District 2 981-7120

Attachments:

1) Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 2591THE BASIC MATERIAL NEEDS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN ACT

WHEREAS, during the 2012-2013 school year there were nearly 270,000 homeless children and youth identified in California public schools under the definition provided by the United States McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, during the 2012-2013 school year there were approximately 700 homeless children and youth identified in the Berkeley K-12 schools; and

WHEREAS, according to government data, academic research, a survey of more than 200 homeless liaisons and various other sources, these students have poorer academic and life outcomes when compared to their affluent peers; and

WHEREAS, a significant hardship that contributes to these poor outcomes as identified by many of these sources is an absence of access to basic material needs such as school supplies, toiletries, shoes, clothes, dental supplies and other materials; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 2591, the *Basic Material Needs for Homeless Children Act*, authored by Assemblymember Shirley Weber and coauthored by Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, would provide the basic material needs of homeless children throughout California.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council supports AB 2591to help provide the basic material needs of homeless children and youth throughout California, which would improve academic outcomes for homeless children throughout California.