



Senator Melissa Hurtado

REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 14

Senate Bill 436

Family Resource Centers

As Introduced February 21, 2019

SUMMARY

SB 436 would formalize Family Resource Centers (FRC) as a key delivery network of services and as conduits to strengthening families via family-centered, community-based and culturally sensitive services that include cross-system collaboration as a means to prevent child abuse and neglect.

THE PROBLEM

Nearly two-thirds of California adults have experienced at least one “adverse childhood experience” (ACE)—including physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or living within a household characterized by dysfunction such as a family member with chronic substance abuse issues.

Research shows that early childhood adversities negatively impact a child’s developmental functioning, increasing risks of social, emotional, academic, psychological, and behavioral problems. The impacts of child abuse ripple throughout our society with abuse costing our nation a staggering \$200 million every single day in funding associated with increased utilization of the child welfare, foster care, health care, mental health, social services, criminal justice, education, and beyond. Unfortunately, however, California’s current approach towards child safety and wellbeing is predominately reactive—not preventative.

While child welfare has made important shifts in its models of care, even greater opportunities exist to address the root causes by focusing upstream on early-intervention and prevention, combating abuse before it happens. Unlike child welfare systems across the nation who have leveraged a variety of strategies and regulatory frameworks to fund and sustain their local Family Resource Centers (FRC) as successful upstream, early-intervention and prevention organizations, California has not. Many California FRCs have historically and continue to apply ad-hoc funding,

often piecing together blended strategies through private donations and county dollars, including general fund or declining First 5 funding. A key reason is FRCs are not recognized entities under state law.

BACKGROUND

Since the 1970’s, Family Resource Centers (FRCs) have emerged throughout the United States and in California as a “place-based” approach that invests in preventing child abuse and building community. Since that time, the number of FRCs in California has grown to an estimated 350, with networks at both statewide and regional levels. California FRCs are focused on strengthening families, building communities and mitigating risk factors which lead to abuse. A critical partner to government agencies in recent years, FRCs have played a major role in Affordable Care Act and Covered California education and outreach; Franchise Tax Board outreach to those eligible for earned income credits; California Department of Social Services immigration-related education and support; and disaster-relief post-fire and earthquakes - strategies designed to strengthen families to prevent child abuse and neglect.

SOLUTION

SB 436 seeks to formalize “family resource centers” (FRC) in statute, formally recognizing their involvement in programmatic activities already underway within the Office of Child Abuse Prevention.

SUPPORT

Child Abuse Prevention Center (co-sponsor)
California Family Resource Association (co-sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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