



**LEGISLATION AND  
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June 19, 2019

Honorable Melissa Hurtado  
Chair, Human Services Committee  
California State Senate  
Capitol Building, Room 3070  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 163 (GARCIA) as amended May 30, 2019 – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Hurtado:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 163**. This bill is currently pending in the Senate Human Services Committee.

This bill would require the Department of Social Services to create a facilities liaison position within its immigration services unit to, among other duties, connect state-licensed group homes, short-term residential therapeutic programs (STRTPs) foster family agencies, and resource families that serve undocumented immigrant youth with appropriate supports and services, including, but not limited to, legal services, mental health assessments and services, and public benefits, as specified. It would also require the facilities liaison to arrange a meeting for each identified unaccompanied undocumented minor with a qualified organization that has received a grant to provide legal services.

Disability Rights California, as part of its authority to investigate immigrant children in the custody of the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), has conducted scores of interviews with undocumented children. These interviews have revealed that unaccompanied undocumented minor

children (UUMs) and undocumented immigrant youth are some of the most vulnerable immigrants in the United States. Many of these children arrive having experienced trauma, including symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions. Many have physical, sensory and other disabilities. Unfortunately, many of these children do not receive the supports and services that they need to address their medical and mental health needs. Our interviews reveal pervasive needs for these immigrant children.

This bill makes one attempt to assist these undocumented children and youth by providing resources at the state level to assist county child welfare and human services agencies to identify services and supports to improve their well-being. The needs are great but this bill can serve as a source of additional supports.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child  
Legislative Director  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Human Services Committee  
Taryn Smith, Chief Consultant, Senate Human Services Committee  
Daphne Hunt, Chief Consultant, Assembly Human Services  
Committee  
Honorable Cristina Garcia, California State Assembly  
Lamont Gordon, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member Garcia  
Joe Parra, Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus Committee