

**Senior Services Coalition**  
of Alameda County

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Hon. Mark Stone  
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee  
California State Assembly  
1020 N Street, Room 124  
Sacramento, California 95814  
fax 916-319-2189

March 31, 2014

**Re: AB 1882 - Support**

Dear Assembly Member Stone,

The Senior Services Coalition (SSC) represents over 41 organizations that provide health and supportive services to over 50,000 seniors in Alameda County. We are writing to express our support for Assembly Bill 1882. This legislation will make it easier for kinship families to access benefits and supplemental supports for the foster children in their care. This is especially relevant in our county, where over 10,000 grandparents are responsible for their grandchildren.

Relative caregivers are the backbone of California's child welfare system, caring for nearly 40% of the state's foster children. These relative placements tend to be more stable and cost-effective and help foster children maintain stronger familial, community, and cultural connections. For these reasons placement with relatives is given preference by both state and federal law. Yet California's child welfare system provides inadequate information, support and funding to children placed with relatives. They are denied access to CalWORKs supports and benefits that non-relative foster families receive.

AB 1882 aims to better support relative caregivers and the foster children placed with them by providing additional counseling to families, and facilitating their access to CalWORKs. It would require county child welfare agencies to provide better information to relative caregivers about all financial supports available to them and to complete CalWORKs applications on behalf of these kinship families. It would allow foster children receiving CalWORKs instead of foster care payments to qualify for transportation support, clothing allowances, infant supplements, and specialized care increments, and the same protections from child support collection rules afforded foster children receiving foster care benefits.

AB1882 addresses some of the inequities burdening foster children placed with relative caregivers under current state law, and will help support thousands of children across California who are being cared for by aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, and other kin.

We urge that the committee support this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Wendy Peterson  
Director, Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County

CC: Assemblyman Ken Cooley