



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

September 15, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 407 (Wiener)—Foster care: resource families

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I urge your signature on SB 407 (Wiener). This bill would strengthen the resource family approval process for LGBTQ youth by requiring a caregiver who provides out-of-home care for children in foster care to demonstrate an ability and willingness to meet the needs of a child, regardless of the child's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This bill would also require counties to ensure that resource family applicants complete caregiver training necessary to have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to support children of all races, ethnic group identifications, ancestries, national origins, colors, religions, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities, mental or physical disabilities, or HIV statuses in foster care. SB 407 aligns with the City's objectives to support legislation that contributes to enhancing the social and emotional well-being of foster youth.

In California, roughly 60,000 children are in the foster care system. Approximately 30 percent of youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ. The degree of support that an LGBTQ child receives at home regarding their identity is a strong predictor of their mental health outcomes. The City's [2023 Homeless Point in Time Count Report](#) revealed that adverse childhood experiences is associated with mental health issues and with the severity of an individual's experience with homelessness. Respondents who identified as having experienced trauma during their childhood were 47 percent more likely to have serious mental health issues and 34 percent more likely to be chronically homeless than individuals without childhood trauma. SB 407 will help ensure that LGBTQ foster youth are in supportive and nurturing homes where they can thrive.

SB 407 will improve foster care conditions for LGBTQ youth and reduce their risk for homelessness, involvement with the criminal justice system, and mental health challenges. For these reasons, the City requests your signature on SB 407.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District