

**SAMPLE LETTER TO REQUEST GOVERNOR NEWSOM SIGN AB 546  
(MAINESCHEIN) ADDRESSING FORMER FOSTER CHILD  
HOMELESSNESS**

September 7, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1303 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Submitted via email to [Leg.Unit@gov.ca.gov](mailto:Leg.Unit@gov.ca.gov)

**Re: AB 546 (MAIENSCHEIN) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

ORGANIZATION NAME respectfully requests you sign AB 546 (Maienschein), an uncontroversial consent bill with no opposition and broad support that will ensure dependency court judges and counsel are provided information already in the possession of county child welfare services about whether a foster child or young adult soon-to-be exiting the foster care system might be homeless once they leave.

Data show that homelessness remains a widespread problem among California's former foster youth. "Every year about 4,000 youth age out of care in California. According to Walden Family Services, 65% leave foster care at age 18 with no place to call home. In a representative sample of foster youth in California, over one-third of aged-out 19-year-olds experience homelessness and over 40% couch-surf.[] About 1,400 age out in Los Angeles and of those, at least 400 become instantly homeless upon aging out."<sup>1</sup>

COVID-19 has made this longstanding situation worse. "The majority of [foster] youth who were working at the onset of the State of Emergency either lost their

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<sup>1</sup> <https://finallyfamilyhomes.org/the-problem/#:~:text=More%20than%2023%2C000%20children%20will,by%20the%20age%20of%2024> Forty-four percent of foster youth who leave the extended care program early report experiencing homelessness, underscoring the challenge for those youth who do not remain in care after 18 years of age. (Feng, H., Harty, J., Okpych, N., and Courtney, Mark (May 2020) *Memo from Cal Youth: Predictors of Homelessness at Age 21*. Chicago, Illinois: Chaplin Hall at the University of Chicago p. 4).

jobs or experienced a reduction in hours—79 percent in THP-NMD and 60 percent in THP-Plus.”<sup>2</sup>

Homeless youth are more likely to develop substance abuse issues and are more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse.

AB 546 simply requires the dependency judge and the parties be informed in the county’s final written report filed prior to termination of jurisdiction over the 18 year old or nonminor dependent what is already known by the county; namely, whether in fact the child has arranged for a stable place to live after they age out.

Please sign AB 546 (Maienschein). Ensuring all parties are simply made aware of the true looming plight of our foster children prior to them exiting into the world to fend for themselves is the least we should do for them.

Sincerely,

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<sup>2</sup> Lee, Simone Tureck, “THP-NMD & THP-PLUS ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20” (2020) San Francisco: California: John Burton Advocates for Youth p.26.