

Memorandum in Support

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND THE LAW

Children #4

June 8, 2015

S. 1615

By: Senator Avella

A. 7756

By: M. of A. Hevesi

Senate Committee: Children and Families

Assembly Committee: Children and Families

Effective Date: Immediately

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to increasing from \$300 a month to \$600 a month the rent subsidy payable to a foster child living independently.

LAW AND SECTIONS REFERRED TO: Amends Social Services Law § 409-a

THE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND THE LAW STRONGLY SUPPORTS THIS LEGISLATION

In 1988, the Social Services Law was amended to permit local Social Services Districts to pay a housing subsidy as a preventive service to hasten discharge from foster care. The statutory limit established in 1988 was \$300 a month, for no longer than three years. This amount has not changed in more than 25 years while the cost of living has doubled during that same time span. Increasing the amount to monthly stipend cap to \$600 will at least allow a meaningful contribution to be made toward today's high rental costs. Amending the statutory cap will not cause an unwarranted fiscal impact on local Social Services Districts as the decision to offer such a housing subsidy as a special grant is entirely at the discretion of the District in each individual case. In actuality, getting children out of foster care will save districts considerably more than \$600 for each child.

Based on the forgoing, the New York State Bar Association's Committee on Children and the Law **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** this legislation.

Betsy Ruslander, Chair
Committee on Children and the Law

Kathleen DeCataldo, Chair
Legislative Subcommittee