

March 12, 2018

The Honorable Todd Gloria
Assemblymember, 78th District
State Capitol, Room 4126
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2119 (Gloria) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gloria,

The California LGBT Health and Human Services Network is pleased to support your AB 2119, which ensures that foster youth and nonminor dependents have access to gender-affirming health and behavioral health care. The California LGBT Health and Human Services Network is a statewide coalition of over 60 non-profit providers, community centers, and researchers working collectively to advocate for state level policies and resources that will advance LGBT health. We strive to provide coordinated leadership about LGBT health policy in a proactive, responsive manner that promotes health and wellness as part of the movement for LGBT equality.

All foster youth and nonminor dependents are entitled to medically necessary health and behavioral health care. Unfortunately, many transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) foster youth face obstacles when seeking the specific health care services they need. These youth are at extremely high risk for depression, poor health, and even suicide as a result of the rejection, harassment and abuse they experience in their homes, schools, and communities. Withholding timely, appropriate treatment to TGNC youth in foster care places them at even higher risk of harm.

Existing law gives foster youth and nonminor dependents the right to receive medical, dental, vision, and mental health services, but does not explicitly address

gender-affirming care. AB 2119 makes clear that child welfare agencies must ensure that TGNC foster youth and nonminor dependents can get access to the gender-affirming care they need, consistent with established medical standards.

AB 2119 will further the healthy development of TGNC foster youth and nonminor dependents and advance the state's goal to promote the safety, well-being, and permanency of all children in California's child welfare system.

For these reasons, we support your AB 2119 and thank you for your leadership to advance this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amanda Wallner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amanda Wallner, Director
California LGBT Health and Human Services Network