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Email to [jennifer.swenson@asm.ca.gov](mailto:jennifer.swenson@asm.ca.gov) and cc: [jorge.barajas@sen.ca.gov](mailto:jorge.barajas@sen.ca.gov) and [s.ezrine@kids-alliance.org](mailto:s.ezrine@kids-alliance.org)

[DATE]

The Honorable Lorena S. Gonzalez Fletcher

Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations

State Capitol, Room 2114

Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: SB 1083 (Mitchell) – Making RFA Work: Reducing Barriers for Families – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez Fletcher:

On behalf of [Organization], I am writing in support of SB 1083, which will take important steps forward to improve the Resource Family Approval (RFA) process for foster caregivers in California.

[Insert paragraph about your organization]

Currently, the RFA approval takes far longer than the originally estimated 90 days to complete with many families spending upwards of six months to achieve approval. This causes financial hardship for relatives and non-related extended family members who accept placement prior to approval and may lead to delays in children exiting permanence. Conversely, when pre-approval placement options are not used, children linger in temporary housing arrangements that are not sustainable.

SB 1083 will prevent this trade-off by making a series of practical improvements to the RFA process. SB 1083 requires counties to complete RFA in any application, including situations where a child is placed on an emergency basis, within 90-days; extends the deadline for existing certified, licensed, or approved families who had a child in their care in 2017 to convert to RFA approval by December 31, 2020; allows resource family applicants who withdraw their application to resume the application at the point it was withdrawn within 12 months of the withdrawal; clarifies that a youth placed through a Voluntarily Placed Agreement (VPA) with an approved relative or non-related extended family member does not mean RFA approved; and permits months spent with a caregiver prior to resource family approval to count toward the durational requirement for exiting foster care to the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP) program.

RFA was intended to be a family-friendly and child-centered caregiver approval process that eliminates duplication of existing processes and allows for a seamless transition to permanency. SB 1083 will ensure that RFA achieves these very important goals.

For these reasons, [Organization] is pleased to support SB 1083.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title, Organization]