



Agenda Date: 5/17/2005
Agenda Placement: 10B

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Britt Ferguson for Nancy Watt - County Executive Officer
County Executive Office
REPORT BY: Andrew Carey, Management Analyst, 253-4477
SUBJECT: AB 667 - Child Support Enforcement

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign a letter in opposition to AB 667 - Child Support Enforcement.
(Unanimous vote required)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AB 667 - Child Support Enforcement would establish mandatory child support performance targets for every county in the state and require fixed performance measure improvements annually. AB 667 also would allow the State to assess a "performance incentive charge" against the local child support agency or require the removal of the local administrator in counties that do not meet the established performance measurements.

The Board of Supervisors' legislative subcommittee recommends approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign a letter opposing AB 667 - Child Support Enforcement.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) has responsibility for administering laws and regulations pertaining to the administration of child support enforcement obligations. Under current law, each county is responsible for maintaining a local child support agency. In Napa County, as in most other California counties, the local child support agency is funded solely by state and federal dollars.

Existing law provides for the establishment of a State child support incentive funding program permitting counties that come within specified standards of performance to receive state child support incentive funds. Each participating county is required to provide specified county child support information to DCSS. DCSS is required to develop regulations to ensure the uniform reporting of this information.

Existing law also requires DCSS to adopt federal minimum standards as the baseline standard of performance for the local child support agencies and to work in consultation with the local child support agencies to develop program performance targets on an annual federal fiscal year basis. In determining these performance measures, DCSS is required to consider and analyze information on uncollected child support payments in arrears, and to use this analysis to establish program priorities.

AB 667 would revise these provisions, relating to DCSS' collection of information from counties participating in the state child support incentive program, and would instead require the submission of information by all local child support agencies. The bill would also add specified performance measures, would require each local child support agency to achieve improved performance measures annually, and would eliminate an exemption for a county unable to comply with a reporting requirement. According to the California Legislative Analysts' office, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program by increasing the duties of local child support agencies to provide information to DCSS.

AB 667 also would allow the State to assess a "performance incentive charge" against the local child support agency or require the removal of the local administrator (the Director of Child Support Services in the case of Napa County) in counties that do not meet the established performance measurements. However, the bill does not provide any additional funding for local child support agencies to meet the new performance measures. Currently Napa County's Child Support Services is operating with a 30% reduction in staffing levels due to recent State budget cuts. Mandating improved performance without providing funding to replace staff lost due to State budget cuts would place additional burdens on Napa County Child Support Services, which is currently rated 12th statewide in collecting current support and 16th statewide in collecting payment on arrears.

On May 2, 2005, the County's legislative subcommittee reviewed AB 667 and took action to recommend that the Board oppose this bill and authorize the chair to sign a letter of opposition.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . AB 667 - Child Support Enforcement
- B . Letter of opposition

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Britt Ferguson