



April 30, 2024

Senator Steve McClure
A-Section Stratton Building
Office L
Springfield, IL 62707

Re: Illinois SB2824; SCH CD-NONRESIDENT PUPIL-WAIVE

Dear Senator McClure:

On May 1st, 2024, at 2:00 P.M. there will be a hearing regarding Illinois SB2824. In support of this Bill, on behalf of the team at Justice for Kids, we strongly encourage the passage of legislation.

The journey of a foster child is fraught with challenges, reshaping every aspect of their existence from the people they encounter daily to the very routines they rely upon. Foster children have first endured the trauma of neglect, violence and/or abuse. Then they endure trauma of losing their parent or caregiver, why should they suffer the trauma of losing their support system of friends, teachers, and peers? In Illinois, when a child is placed in a new home, they often must leave their current school district. Why should a foster child's education be jeopardized because they have been removed from their home?

The statistics paint a stark picture: between 57% and 93% of foster children experience school changes during their time in care, with significant repercussions ranging from missed lessons to gaps in special education services. Moreover, the odds of high school dropout increase significantly with multiple disruptions in foster care, leading to starkly higher juvenile delinquency rates. Illinois SB2824 aims to break this cycle by affording foster children the stability they desperately need. Research underscores that a stable environment paves the way for predictability and certainty, which are essential ingredients for success in a child's future.

In light of the formidable challenges facing foster children, they should not be subjected to the additional burden of school transitions when it can be readily prevented. As such, I ask you to strongly consider voting in favor of Illinois SB2824.

Very truly yours,

Julianna B. Walo

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A Division of Kelley Kronenberg