

Date of Hearing: May 5, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

AB 46 (Luz Rivas) – As Amended April 15, 2021

Policy Committee:	Accountability and Administrative Review	Vote: 6 - 0
	Human Services	8 - 0

Urgency: No      State Mandated Local Program: No      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes the California Youth Empowerment Commission (commission) to formally advise and make recommendations to the Legislature and others on issues affecting California's disconnected and disadvantaged youth. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Establishes the California Youth Empowerment Act (Act) and creates the commission within the Act. Specifies the commission's role is advisory only and requires the commission to consist of 25 voting members between 14 and 25 years of age.
- 2) Requires the Governor to appoint 21 commissioners meeting specified geographical and age requirements and requires at least 10 commissioners to have experienced a physical disability, youth homelessness, foster care or juvenile incarceration. Requires the Senate Committee on Rules and the Speaker of the Assembly to each appoint two at-large public members to the commission.
- 3) Appoints five nonvoting members of the commission including the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and the Secretary of California Health and Human Services Agency (Secretary) and one member each from the Senate and the Assembly. Requires the Governor to appoint an executive director of the commission.
- 4) Requires the commission to conduct regular meetings, beginning August 2022, according to specified timeframes and procedures, and, among other duties, to examine and discuss and formally advise and make recommendations to the Legislature, the SPI and the Governor on various legislative and fiscal issues affecting youth. The bill allows commissioners to attend meetings through a teleconferencing platform if they are unable to travel to the meeting, provided other provisions of existing law are met.
- 5) Requires each public member of the commission to receive \$100 per diem and actual necessary traveling expenses while on official business of the commission.
- 6) Requires the commission to publish an annual report to the Legislature, SPI, Secretary and the Governor detailing the activities and outcomes of the commission.
- 7) Authorizes the commission to accept gifts and grants, and creates the Youth Commission Fund in the State Treasury, with moneys deposited in the fund available for expenditure, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to carry out the duties of the commission.

## **FISCAL EFFECT:**

Estimated total costs of \$1.4 million (GF) to establish the commission and meet the requirements of the bill. These costs include one-time costs of \$152,000 (GF) for equipment and supplies and ongoing costs of \$1.3 million (GF) annually for the executive director and four additional full-time staff to staff the commission and conduct fund raising activities, commissioner per diem, operating expenses and conference and meeting expenses.

The bill specifies the commission is to be funded by both public and private funding sources and authorizes the commission to seek out funding and in-kind contribution from foundations, nonprofit organizations, public and private entities, and other individuals or groups in order to carry out the work of the commission.

(This proposal is also being considered in the Legislative budget process. The budget request additionally includes a \$2 million allocation for the commission to award grants.)

## **COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill seeks to empower under-represented youth with formal opportunities to engage in California's civic process.
- 2) **Background.** Several states have established a youth advisory body within their state government. Children's cabinets, councils and commissions typically include heads of government agencies of child and youth-serving programs, who meet regularly with the collective goal of coordinating services, developing outcomes, and collaboratively deciding upon and implementing plans to foster the well-being of young people.

California has established various state boards, commissions and advisory committees to address the needs of specific vulnerable populations. Among these are the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and the California Commission on Asian & Pacific Islander American Affairs, both which are charged with engaging the public to define challenges faced by California's most vulnerable populations and policy solutions to addresses these challenges to the California State Legislature, the Governor, and the greater public. This bill uses a similar model to establish a statewide youth commission.

- 3) **Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.** Existing law, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, authorizes state bodies to conduct meetings via teleconference provided certain criteria are met, including that agendas are posted at all teleconference locations and each teleconference location is identified in the notice and agenda, each teleconference location is accessible to the public, and members of the public are able to address the state body directly.
- 4) **Prior Legislation.**

AB 1858 (L. Rivas), of the 2019-20 Legislative Session, was substantially similar to this bill. AB 1858 was referred to the Assembly Accountability and Administrative Review Committee, but never heard.

AB 2252 (DeSaulnier), of the 2007-08 Legislative Session, would have established the California Commission on Youth, similar to this bill. AB 2252 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Jennifer Swenson / APPR. / (916) 319-2081