



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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April 20, 2022

The Honorable Tom Lackey
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 5340
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 2654 (LACKEY) SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Lackey:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 2654.

AB 2654, Gabriel's Law, would reconvene the State Child Death Review Council by removing the requirement that funds are appropriated for it in the Budget Act in order to be operative.

From 1992 to 2008 California operated a State Child Death Review Council. However, in 2008 funding for the Council was eliminated during one of the state's budget crises. The purpose of the Council is to oversee the statewide coordination and integration of state and local efforts to address fatal child abuse or neglect and to create a body of information to prevent child deaths. Because there has been no funding in the budget, the Council has not operated for 14 years.

Currently in California there is no state child death review team. Many California counties continue to maintain local child death review teams; however, they are merely authorized and not mandated in statute.

When the Council was operating, multiple state reports were created, protocols were developed, training was provided to local teams, inter-county information was shared, and the importance and effectiveness of child death review in preventing child fatalities was recognized.

Re-establishment of the State Council is important to assure there is a central body to bring agencies and associations together to provide statewide coordination and integration of state and local efforts to address fatal child abuse or neglect. This would be accomplished through development of standardized definitions for fatal child abuse or neglect; development of protocols for the investigation of fatal child abuse or neglect; collection and interpretation of data and case information for analysis to be discussed in a bi-annual report that can be shared in an electronic format; and development of a body of information to prevent future child fatalities.

Thank you for introducing this important child protection measure.

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If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,



GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney

cc: Assembly Public Safety Committee
Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Gary Olson, Assembly Republican Policy Consultant
Deanne Tilton Durfee, Los Angeles Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect