**Sample Support Letter - Submit On Your Letterhead**

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**Send copy to:** mccormickj@clccal.org

DATE

The Honorable Alex Lee

Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee

1020 N Street, Room 124

Sacramento, CA 95817

**RE: AB 373 (RUBIO) – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Lee & Honorable Committee Members:

[Organization name] is proud to support AB 373, authored by Assemblymember Rubio, which seeks to amend existing law related to the representation of nonminor dependents in dependency proceedings.

[Insert organization’s background and/or any specific stories or cases to emphasize the need for this bill.]

Currently, existing law requires appointed counsel to represent the best interests of children and nonminor dependents in dependency proceedings. However, this standard is often inappropriately applied to nonminor dependents, who, as legal adults, deserve the right to direct their own representation. The current framework can result in legal counsel overriding the wishes of nonminor dependents (legal adults) in favor of what an attorney perceives to be in their best interest, effectively limiting the nonminor dependents’ decision-making power.

AB 373 directly addresses this issue by:

* **Clarifying the role of counsel** by requiring that appointed attorneys for nonminor dependents advocate for their expressed wishes rather than substituting their judgment.
* **Upholding nonminor autonomy** by affirming their right to actively participate in legal decisions regarding housing, education, and employment.
* **Distinguishing minors from nonminor dependents** by ensuring counsel can continue to advocate for a minor’s best interests while nonminor dependents receive legal representation aligned with their stated interests.

We urge the Committee to support AB 373 as it works to strengthen the rights of nonminor dependents and ensures that counsel is given the mandate to appropriately advocate for them, recognizing their autonomy and needs. This bill represents a crucial step forward in making California’s juvenile dependency system more responsive, just, and respectful of nonminor dependents' voices.

For the reasons stated above, we strongly support AB 373 and respectfully request your “AYE” vote.

Sincerely,

NAME

TITLE

cc: Members and Staff, Assembly Human Services Committee

 Assemblymember Rubio