**email to** **simone@jbaforyouth.org** **no later than Thursday, September 21 at 3:00**

September 14, 2017 (Please make sure the letter is dated no earlier than 9/14)

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

Governor, State of California

State Capitol, Suite 1173

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT SB 12 (BEALL) — FOSTER YOUTH IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Dear Governor Brown,

I am writing as a youth who has been in the foster care system to respectfully request that you sign Senate Bill 12 (Beall) into law.

[INSERT A COUPLE SENTENCES ABOUT HOW FINANCIAL AID HAS HELPED YOU TO GO TO COLLEGE AND ANY CHALLENGES THAT YOU HAD ACCESSING FINANCIAL AID]

As my situation demonstrates, financial aid is vital to youth from foster care who wish to go to college and research shows that not enough foster youth have access to these important benefits. A 2015 report found that just 50 percent of foster youth in California’s community colleges received the federal Pell Grant, even though almost all foster youth students qualify. This is a major factor in the low rates of college success see for foster youth - by age 26, just 4 percent of former foster youth have achieved a college degree as compared to 36 percent of the same-age population of young adults.

SB 12 would ensure foster youth receive the financial aid by addressing many of the major barriers that foster youth face. First, it would help current foster youth apply for financial aid by requiring their social worker to identify a person to assist them. Next, it would streamline the financial aid verification process for foster youth who apply through Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Finally, it would expand an existing on-campus based support program from the current level of 10 community college districts to up to 20 districts, using existing, unspent money.

Thank you for your long-standing support for the educational needs of foster youth. I urge you to sign SB 12 into law.

Sincerely,

 [Include Your Signature]

[INSERT Your Full Name]
[INSERT Your School (if you are or were a student)]