

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 896**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Elhawary**

February 19, 2025

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An act to amend Section 16500 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to child welfare services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 896, as introduced, Elhawary. Child welfare services.

Existing law requires the state, through the State Department of Social Services and county welfare departments, to establish and support a public system of statewide child welfare services to be developed as rapidly as possible and to be available in each county of the state. Existing law requires all counties to establish and maintain specialized organizational entities within the county welfare department, having sole responsibility for the operation of the child welfare services program.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to those provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 16500 of the Welfare and Institutions
- 2 Code is amended to read:
- 3 16500. (a) The state, through the department and county
- 4 welfare departments, shall establish and support a public system
- 5 of statewide child welfare services to be developed as rapidly as

1 possible and to be available in each county of the state. All counties  
2 shall establish and maintain specialized organizational entities  
3 within the county welfare-~~department~~ *department*, which shall  
4 have sole responsibility for the operation of the child welfare  
5 services program.

6 ~~The~~

7 (b) *The* Legislature hereby declares its intent, in providing for  
8 this statewide system of child welfare services, that all children  
9 are entitled to be safe and free from abuse and neglect.

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