**Please send a support letter – On your letter head**

**Sample Support Letter – Assembly Bill 1301 (Cooley)**

**Submit via the portal:** [**https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/**](https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/)

**Send via email to:** Cathy Senderling (csend@cwda.org)

**[Date] – Due by June 17th**

The Honorable Melissa Hurtado, Chair

Senate Human Services Committee

1020 N Street, Room 521,

Sacramento, CA 95814

 **RE: AB 1301 (Cooley) – Private Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Hurtado,

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] is in support of AB 1301 by Assembly Member Cooley, which will modernize the Private Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program (PAARP) and provide for its administration at the county level going forward.

PAARP is a state-level program established in 1974 to support collaboration between county child welfare and private adoption agencies in recruiting adoptive families for foster children. PAARP provides reimbursements to private adoption agencies, including those linked to Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) for various adoption-related activities. Private agencies can receive up to $10,000 per foster child who is adopted, upon submitting a claim.

While the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) administers the program, $15.8 million was realigned to counties as part of the 2011 Realignment legislation. However, these funds were placed into a special account available only to CDSS to continue administering PAARP. Statutorily, counties have little to no control over PAARP expenditures, yet private agency adoption-related claims have exceeded the amount provided by counties to the state, in several recent years, resulting in unexpected county costs as CDSS has billed counties to recoup these expenditures. [Insert information on the extent to which your county has received such a bill and the difficulty it causes for counties when they are unable to manage or plan for PAARP expenses.]

As currently structured, PAARP also is inconsistent with the changes implemented under the Continuum of Reform (CCR). CCR resulted in a new approval process for families that streamlines the prior licensing, adoption, and relative approval processes into a single, unified process with an emphasis on up-front permanency for foster youth. [Local example of how your RFA process now includes some activities previously done later in the process.]

Counties must be able to plan and manage our expenditures, and need flexibility to work with local adoption agencies and FFAs to continue serving our children and families through a variety of permanency pathways. AB 1301 will provide needed county oversight and allow for unspent funding to be used more flexibly for services outside of the specified PAARP activities, while supporting the partnerships counties currently have with our valued private adoption agencies.

For these reasons, [Organization] has a position of support on AB 1301.

Sincerely,

[Name] [Title]

[Organization]