

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: April 20, 2021

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No: 21-0002-S95
Assignment No: 21-04-0311

SUBJECT: Resolution to support AB 506

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (Rodriguez – Krekorian) to include in the City’s 2021-2022 State and Federal Legislative Programs SUPPORT for AB 506 (Gonzalez) which would require public or private youth organizations to establish policies that protect children from abuse, including background checks and training, and mandate long-term volunteers who supervise children to report abuse.

SUMMARY

The Resolution (Rodriguez – Krekorian), introduced on April 7, 2021, notes that organizations that provide programs to youth have had widespread issues with child abuse. For instance, more than 90,000 childhood sexual abuse claims were filed against Boy Scouts of America, for incidents spanning several decades. The Resolution notes that many of these organizations lack adequate policies and processes to protect youth from abuse.

The Resolution therefore requests support of AB 506 (Gonzalez), which would make volunteers at public or private youth centers, youth recreation programs, or youth organizations whose duties include direct contact with or supervision of children mandatory reporters of child abuse; further, AB 506 would require an administrator, employee, or volunteer of a youth service organization to complete online mandated reporter training, and undergo a background screening.

BACKGROUND

Existing law regarding mandatory child abuse reporting includes administrators or employees of a public or private youth center, youth recreation program, or youth organization as mandated reporters, but does not require the same of volunteers whose duties primarily include interaction with or supervision of children. AB 506 would expand the mandatory reporting requirement to include volunteers whose duties primarily include interaction with or supervision of children.

Existing law requires a business that provides services to minors, to provide written notice to the parent or guardian of a youth participating in the service offered by the business regarding the business’ policies relating to criminal background checks for employees who provide services to minors. AB 506 would require an administrator, employee, or volunteer of a youth service organization to undergo a background screening. Volunteers who volunteer for fewer than 16 hours per month, or 32 hours a year, would not be subjected to this requirement.

AB 506 was amended on April 7, 2021 to modify the language concerning insurance for youth-serving organizations. The amended version of AB 506 would authorize an insurer to request information demonstrating compliance with these provisions from a youth service organization before writing liability insurance for a youth service organization. Further, the amended version of the legislation provides examples of child abuse prevention policies and procedures that youth-service organizations should implement, including, but not limited to, policies to ensure the secure and anonymous reporting of suspected incidents of child abuse to persons or entities outside of the organization; and policies requiring, to the greatest extent possible, the presence of at least two mandated reporters whenever administrators, employees, or volunteers are in contact with, or supervising, children.

BILL STATUS

02/09/21 Introduced.
02/18/21 Referred to the Committees on Insurance and Public Safety.
04/07/21 Amended.



Tristan Noack
Analyst

SMT:tcjn
Attachment: Resolution

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles, with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, child abuse in organizations that provide programs to youth has been a widespread, national problem for decades; and

WHEREAS, more than 90,000 childhood sexual abuse claims were filed against Boy Scouts of America, for incidents spanning several decades; and

WHEREAS, the organization knew about many of these incidents, but failed to act because volunteers were not mandated to do so by law; and

WHEREAS, many youth-serving organizations do not have the appropriate mechanisms in place to assure that youth are protected from abuse, such as reporting procedures or background checks for volunteers; and

WHEREAS, AB 506 (Gonzalez), introduced on February 9, 2021, would implement standards to address the issue of widespread child abuse in youth-serving organizations, such as the Boy Scouts of America, by requiring youth service organizations to take a number of steps, such as developing child abuse prevention policies and procedures, to become eligible for liability insurance; and

WHEREAS, parents should be able to leave their children with youth-serving organizations without the fear that their children may be subjected to abuse while in the care of such an organization;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2021-2022 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 506 (Gonzalez), which would require youth-serving nonprofits to establish policies that protect children from abuse, including background checks and training, in order to receive insurance coverage; and mandate long-term volunteers who supervise children to report abuse.

PRESENTED BY: Monica Rodriguez
MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY: Paul Kheorian

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