

March 4, 2016

Senator Dianne Feinstein
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104

331 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
Via mail and email

Re: Fair Day in Court for Kids Act

Dear Senator Feinstein,

Our California-based refugee and immigrants' rights organizations are writing to request your co-sponsorship for the Fair Day in Court for Kids Act.

We strongly support this bill, which would ensure that vulnerable children are afforded a fair opportunity to seek asylum and other protections, rather than being sent back to the violence they fled. Several studies have shown that access to counsel may be the single most important factor for whether a child will be deported; children with attorneys are five times more likely to be granted protection in the United States. Appointing counsel for children would also improve the efficiency of the system as a whole, saving administrative delays and much needed immigration court resources. This is especially important in California, where many children are released to sponsors in our strong Central American immigrant communities. We represent and provide assistance to immigrant children and the demand for our services has exceeded our capacity—the government must step in to ensure that all children are afforded the due process they deserve.

We welcome the opportunity to speak with you about our support for the Fair Day in Court for Kids Act and hope that we can count on your support. Should you need any additional information related to this request, please contact Blaine Bookey of the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies at (415) 703-8202 or bookeybl@uchastings.edu.

Sincerely,

Asian Law Alliance
San Jose, CA

Central American Resource Center
Los Angeles, CA

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach
San Francisco, CA

Centro Legal de la Raza
Oakland, CA

Catholic Charities of the East Bay
San Francisco, CA

Dolores Street Community Services
San Francisco, CA

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
San Francisco, CA

Human Rights First
Los Angeles, CA

Immigrant Defenders Law Center
Los Angeles, CA

Immigrant Legal Resource Center
San Francisco, CA

Kids in Need of Defense
San Francisco, CA

La Raza Centro Legal
San Francisco, CA

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the
San Francisco Bay Area
San Francisco, CA

Legal Advocates for Children and Youth
San Jose, CA

Legal Services for Children
San Francisco, CA

Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice
Los Angeles, CA

Pangea Legal Services
San Francisco, CA

Public Law Center
Santa Ana, CA

San Francisco Public Defender
San Francisco, CA

Social Justice Collaborative
Oakland, CA

USF School of Law Immigration & Deportation
Defense Clinic
San Francisco, CA