

Date of Hearing: January 9, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Alex Lee, Chair

AB 1274 (Connolly) – As Amended January 3, 2024

SUBJECT: Young Californians’ Inclusion Act

SUMMARY: Adds “fostering a new generation of young Californians to enter the civil workforce” to the existing list of legislative and fiscal issues the California Youth Empowerment Commission (CYEC) must advise and make formal recommendations to the Legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and Governor by May 30, 2025, and annually thereafter, via annual report.

EXISTING LAW:

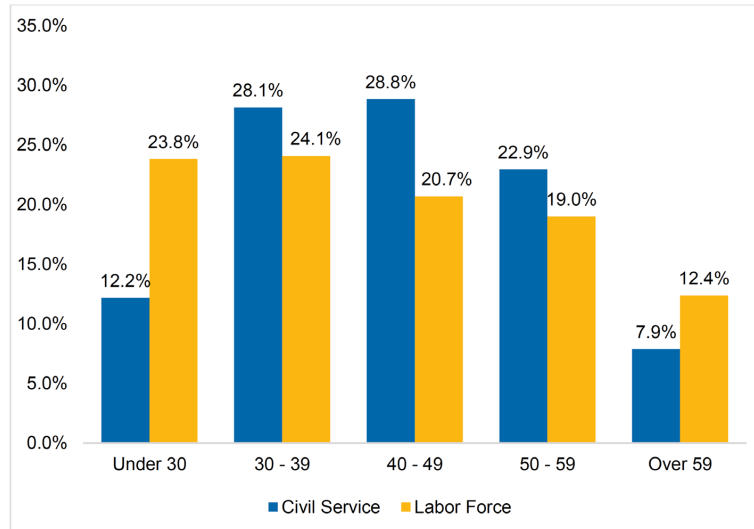
- 1) Establishes the “California Youth Empowerment Act” (Act). (Government Code (GC) §§ 8263-8276)
- 2) Creates the CYEC to consist of 13 voting commissioners between 14 and 25 years of age, with 11 members appointed by the Governor, one at-large member appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, and one at-large member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, along with several ex officio, nonvoting members from various geographic regions of the state. (GC § 8263)
- 3) Requires the CYEC to do the following:
 - a) Examine and discuss policy and fiscal issues affecting the interests, needs, and conditions of the youth of California.
 - b) Formally advise and make recommendations to the Legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Governor on specific legislative and fiscal issues affecting youth, such as the following:
 - i) Achievement gap;
 - ii) Behavioral and physical health;
 - iii) Bullying;
 - iv) Career preparation;
 - v) Child welfare;
 - vi) Child and sexual abuse;
 - vii) Civic engagement;
 - viii) Climate crisis;
 - ix) College affordability and student loans;

- x) Depression and suicide;
 - xi) Education;
 - xii) Employment;
 - xiii) Financial literacy;
 - xiv) Foster care;
 - xv) Gun violence;
 - xvi) Health care;
 - xvii) Homelessness;
 - xviii) Housing and transportation;
 - xix) Immigration and undocumented youth;
 - xx) Juvenile justice;
 - xxi) Labor and jobs;
 - xxii) LGBTQ civil rights;
 - xxiii) Mental health;
 - xxiv) Poverty;
 - xxv) Racial, economic, and gender equity;
 - xxvi) Reproductive justice;
 - xxvii) Safety;
 - xxviii) Social media and networking;
 - xxix) Substance abuse and vaping;
 - xxx) Youth development; and,
 - xxx) Any other policy or fiscal issues deemed appropriate by the commission. (GC § 8272)
- 4) Requires the CYEC conduct regular meetings, examine a long list of policy and fiscal issues affecting the interests, needs, and conditions of the youth of California and issue an annual report with recommendations to the Legislature, the SPI, and the Governor, while also authorizing the CYEC to adopt resolutions, draft model legislation, provide testimony during legislative committee meetings, conduct public hearings, and award prizes or direct grants to organizations. (GC §§ 8270, 8272, 8273)
- 5) Sunsets the CYEC Act on January 1, 2030. (GC § 8276)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, this bill has not been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

COMMENTS:

Background: *California’s Civil Service Workforce.* California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) and the California Government Operations Agency (GovOps) release an annual census of Employees in State Civil Service. The last published report to the Governor and Legislature, reported a general disparity in age between civil service and general labor workforce as shown in the graph. While the annual census of Employees in State Civil Service shows that in most categories, the civil service population is consistent with the state population and labor force, when comparing age range, the civil service workforce has a higher



percentage of people between the ages of 30 and 59 while the general labor workforce has a higher percentage of people under the age of 30. However, CalHR and GovOps reported, “In the past five years, the civil service has become younger, with the percentage of employees under 40 growing from 35 percent to 40 percent. The percentage of employees ages 40 to 49 increased by 0.8 percent while the percentage of employees over 50 decreased by 2.4 percent.”

This bill aims to further increase youth within the civil service workforce by including this issue as a topic of discussion for the CYEC.

California Youth Empowerment Commission. After several attempts within the Legislature at creating a council or cabinet to improve coordination within state government among departments and agencies providing services to youth, AB 46 (Luz Rivas), Chapter 660, Statutes of 2021, established the CYEC with the mission to empower under-represented youth with formal opportunities to engage in California’s civic process. The report as required AB 46 was due on January 1, 2024, but was extended to January 1, 2030, through the budget trailer bill process because the CYEC had not convened yet. This bill builds upon those existing requirements for the CYEC to make recommendations.

Other Youth Civic Engagement Efforts. Youth Commissions are designed to allow for a youth voice to contribute to policy discussions that impact youth. According to the Institute for Local Government, 87 cities and 8 counties throughout California have a Youth Commission for local youth between 12 and 24 years old that offer guidance to their respective city, county, or special district.

On the federal level, there are also considerable efforts to bring youth input to the front. The Biden Administration created the “Office of Young Americans of the President” with the intention of creating an interagency group to elevate how agencies engage American youth, and to build opportunities for American youth by creating a pipeline for public service with a commitment from the Office of Presidential Personnel of hiring American Youth.

Other past federal government youth-led input and consultation programs include the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Youth Preparedness Council, the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services' effort to hire youth consultants to provide technical assistance of the foster care system, and the U.S. Department of Education's creation of the "Youth Liaison" staff position.

Author's Statement: According to the Author, "As we look toward the future, it is clear that the challenges we face will require bold and innovative solutions. Young people bring new perspectives, fresh ideas, and a passion for making positive change. As we face urgent issues like climate change, economic inequality, and social justice, we need to be sure that we have the talent and expertise necessary to tackle these challenges head-on. We must foster a new generation of young Californians to enter the civil service workforce."

Equity Implications: As noted above, the CYEC is tasked with empowering under-represented youth with formal opportunities to engage in California's civic process. The provisions of this bill seek to bolster that mission by also requiring the CYEC to consider how to foster a new generation of young Californians to enter the civil service workforce. As noted in the findings and declarations, the state workforce is aging and many state employees are likely to retire in the next 10 to 20 years. In 2003, 31% of the state workforce was 50 years or older; in 2010, the percentage of those 50 years and older increased to 37% of the workforce. Contrasting this, currently in the general labor workforce, 40% of the workers are under the age of 35. By emphasizing efforts to increase youth participation in the civil workforce, CYEC can attempt to create parity in ages between the public and private workforces, ensuring that the youth perspective is included across all sectors.

RELATED AND PRIOR LEGISLATION:

AB 46 (Luz Rivas), Chapter 660, Statutes of 2021, established the Act to address, among other issues, the growing need to engage youth directly with policymakers. AB 46 also established the CYEC in state government for the main purpose of providing meaningful opportunities for civic engagement to improve the quality of life for California's disconnected and disadvantaged youth.

AB 1858 (Luz Rivas) of 2020, would have, similar to AB 46, created the "Youth Empowerment Act" to address, among other issues, the growing need to engage youth directly with policymakers. In addition, AB 1858 would have established the Commission in state government for the main purpose of providing meaningful opportunities for civic engagement to improve the quality of life for California's disconnected and disadvantaged youth. *AB 1858 was referred to the Assembly Accountability and Administrative Review Committee but was not set for hearing due to COVID-19 constraints.*

SB 421 (Pan) of 2021, would have established, until January 1, 2025, the "Children's Cabinet of California" to serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration among agencies that provide services to the children and youth of the state. *SB 421 was held on the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.*

AB 823 (Dickinson) of 2011, would have established the California Children's Coordinating Council to serve, until January 1, 2019, as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration among agencies that provide services to California's children and youth. *AB 823 was vetoed by Governor Brown.*

AB 2252 (DeSaulnier) of 2008, would have established the California Youth Council to better ensure that the developmental needs of youth in California are met. *AB 2252 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger.*

AB 2216 (Bass), Chapter 384, Statutes 2006, created the California Child Welfare Council to improve outcomes for foster youth by establishing an advisory body within the California Health and Human Services Agency to improve the coordination and service deliver to the child welfare and foster care system.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None of file

Opposition

None of file

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