



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Clara County Approves the Country's First Basic Income Pilot Program for Transitioning Foster Youth

May 12, 2020 The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, unanimously approved a \$900,000 in funding for the Country's first [pilot program providing basic income to transitioning foster youth](#).

County of Santa Clara Supervisor Dave Cortese, who introduced this measure, said: "Youth transitioning out of the foster care system are a group of residents who are particularly in need of and deserve robust support. Creating a pilot program to provide a basic income to these individuals will allow the County to better support their transition out

of our foster care system and to help them find a stable path to success, wellbeing and independence.”

Under this pilot program, young people transitioning out of the foster care system in Santa Clara County, from ages 21 through 24, would receive unconditional cash payments of \$1,000 a month from June 2020 through May 2021.

Partnering with Supervisor Cortese on the pilot program was the Gerald Huff Fund for Humanity, a nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the understanding, acceptance and implementation of Universal Basic Income programs to benefit all Americans.

Gisèle Huff, president of the Gerald Huff Fund for Humanity, recalled a conversation with Supervisor Cortese last summer about the needs of transitioning foster youth and the potential of a basic income component to help meet those needs. As part of the Fund's mission to promote the implementation of Universal Basic Income programs, Huff decided to participate in the County's effort to support this vulnerable population.

Universal Basic Income, sometimes referred to as basic income or UBI, is an investment in society through an amount of income that is unconditional, universal, individual and regularly provided.

In other words, it's an income floor below which no one is allowed to fall, and all other income adds to. It is traditionally considered to be an amount sufficient to raise everyone above the poverty line, but that is not required to meet the definition of UBI.

Over the last decade, a growing body of evidence supports the idea that unconditional cash payments provided to people experiencing economic hardship or uncertainty are a potentially transformative intervention. Studies have shown that such payments can reduce

poverty and increase wellbeing, positive health outcomes, and educational attainment.

Supervisor Cortese, recognizing the significant potential adverse impact of Santa Clara County's COVID-19 shelter in place order of March 16, 2020, called for the development of the pilot program plan to be expedited, which made today's vote possible.

A robust evaluation of the pilot is planned, which may serve as a template for the adoption of other basic income programs nationwide to help meet the needs of other vulnerable and, ultimately, the general population nationwide.

Please call the Office of Supervisor Dave Cortese at 408-299 -5030 or Gisèle Huff, President of The Gerald Huff Fund for Humanity, at 415-814- 2792 with any questions or for comment.