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**SB-33 Homeless pupils: California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program.** (2025-2026)

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AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 10, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

**SENATE BILL**

**NO. 33**

Introduced by Senator Cortese  
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Quirk-Silva)  
(Coauthors: [Senators Ashby and Becker](#))  
(Coauthor: [Assembly Member Jackson](#))

December 02, 2024

An act to add and repeal Section 17141.6 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and to add and repeal Section 10007 of, and to add and repeal Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8280) of Division 8 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to homeless pupils.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SB 33, as amended, Cortese. Homeless pupils: California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program.

(1) Existing law establishes various programs to provide assistance to homeless youth, including, among others, homeless youth emergency service pilot projects and the Runaway Youth and Families in Crisis Project.

This bill, subject to an appropriation by the Legislature for this purpose, would require the State Department of Social Services to establish the California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program. The program would award public school pupils who are in grade 12 and are homeless children or youths, as defined, a guaranteed income of \$1,000 each month for 4 months from May 1, 2026, to August 1, 2026, inclusive, as provided. The bill would establish the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Fund as the initial depository of all moneys appropriated, donated, or otherwise received for the program, and upon appropriation by the Legislature, would provide moneys in the fund to counties that opt in to the program for distribution to eligible participants.

(2) Existing federal law, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, provides grants to states to carry out activities relating to the education of homeless children and youths, as defined, including, among others, providing services and activities to improve the identification of homeless children and youths and to enable them to enroll in and succeed in school. Existing law requires

local educational agency liaisons, as defined, to ensure that homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities, as specified.

This bill would require, in counties participating in the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program, local educational agency liaisons to provide all known eligible participants with program information and enrollment forms, as specified.

(3) Existing law, beginning on or after January 1, 2015, in modified conformity with federal income tax law, allows an earned income tax credit, the California Earned Income Tax Credit, against personal income tax. The Personal Income Tax Law also allows, for each taxable year beginning on or after January 1, 2019, a young child tax credit and, for each taxable year beginning on or after January 1, 2022, a foster youth tax credit against the taxes imposed under that law.

This bill, for the taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, and before January 1, 2031, would exclude from gross income, for purposes of the personal income tax, any amount received as an award pursuant to the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program. The bill, for the taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, and before January 1, 2031, would additionally provide that the amount awarded is not earned income for purposes of eligibility for the California Earned Income Tax Credit, the young child tax credit, or the foster youth tax credit.

(4) Existing law establishes various public social services programs to provide eligible recipients with certain benefits, including, but not limited to, cash assistance under the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, nutrition assistance under the CalFresh program, and health care services under the Medi-Cal program. Under existing law, those programs, among others, are in part federally funded and governed by federal eligibility criteria, including specified income or resource limits.

This bill would prohibit any award received by a student through the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program from being considered income or resources for purposes of determining the student's, or any member of their household's, eligibility for benefits or assistance, or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, under any state or local means-tested program, including certain public social services programs. The bill would condition implementation of this provision on not conflicting with federal law, or receipt of any necessary federal waivers or exemptions and the availability of any applicable federal financial participation, as specified.

This bill would require the State Department of Social Services, in consultation with stakeholders and the Legislature, to identify the CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal programs and any other state program that implements a federal means-tested program and that would require an exemption or waiver. The bill would require a state department or agency that administers a program identified by the State Department of Social Services or by the department or agency itself, to approve an exemption or waiver or to seek one from the federal government. If the state fails to receive the necessary federal exemption or waiver, the bill would authorize the State Department of Social Services to consider alternatives to prevent adverse consequences for California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program participants.

(5) This bill would repeal these provisions on January 1, 2029, except as provided.

(6) Existing law requires any bill authorizing a new tax expenditure to contain, among other things, specific goals, purposes, and objectives that the tax expenditure will achieve, detailed performance indicators, and data collection requirements.

This bill would include the additional information required for a bill authorizing a new tax expenditure.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

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## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** Section 17141.6 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

**17141.6.** (a) For the taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, and before January 1, 2031, gross income does not include any amount received as an award pursuant to the California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program established pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8280) of Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(b) For the taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, and before January 1, 2031, any amount received as an award pursuant to the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program established pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8280) of Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code shall not be considered earned income for purposes of eligibility for the California Earned Income Tax Credit pursuant to Section 17052, the young child tax credit pursuant to Section 17052.1, or the foster youth tax credit pursuant to Section 17052.2.

(c) (1) For the purposes of complying with Section 41, the Legislature finds and declares both of the following:

(A) The specific goal, purpose, or objective of the exclusions is to ensure the general welfare and to increase economic security, educational attainment, and employment among youth who have experienced homelessness.

(B) The performance indicators for the Legislature to use in determining whether the exclusions meet the goal, purpose, and objective described in subparagraph (A) are college enrollment, attainment, progress towards degree completion, and measures of economic security, including housing security, ability to meet basic needs, income level, and employment.

(2) (A) On or before March 1, 2027, the State Department of Social Services shall analyze and report to the Legislature both of the following:

(i) College or workforce training program enrollment, attainment, and completion among California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program participants compared to youth experiencing homelessness in previous years and compared to similarly situated youth who are not participants.

(ii) Measures of economic security, including housing security, ability to meet basic needs, income level, and employment, among California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program participants compared to youth experiencing homelessness in previous years and compared to similarly situated youth who are not participants.

(B) A report to be submitted pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until December 1, 2031, and as of that date is repealed.

**SEC. 2.** Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8280) is added to Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

#### **CHAPTER 9. California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program**

**8280.** This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program.

**8281.** As used in this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Award" means guaranteed income provided to an eligible participant for four months pursuant to this chapter.

(b) "Department" means the State Department of Social Services.

(c) "Eligible participant" means a public school pupil who is in grade 12 and is a homeless child or youth, as defined in subsection (2) of Section 725 of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(2)).

(d) "Fund" means the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Fund established pursuant to this chapter.

(e) "Guaranteed income" means unconditional monetary payments issued monthly with the intention of ensuring the economic security of recipients.

(f) "Liaison" means a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths designated pursuant to Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

(g) "Program" means the California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program established pursuant to this chapter.

**8282.** (a) (1) Subject to an appropriation by the Legislature for purposes of this chapter, the department shall establish the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program. Under the program, an eligible participant shall receive a guaranteed income of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) each month from May 1, 2026, to August 1, 2026, inclusive, with payments made on May 1, 2026, June 1, 2026, July 1, 2026, and August 1, 2026. The program may be extended by statute or by a county that meets the condition described in subparagraph (D) of paragraph (2).

(2) (A) The department shall work with the State Department of Education to identify the number of eligible participants in a county.

(B) The department shall award funds to a county that opts in to the program based on the number of eligible participants in the county.

(C) To cover administrative costs, the department shall also award a participating county an additional 10 percent of the amount of funds awarded pursuant to subparagraph (B). For purposes of this subparagraph, administrative costs include the costs of facilitating enrollment and outreach.

(D) If a county does not expend all awarded program funds in 2026, the county may use any remaining funds to continue the program in subsequent years to fund additional eligible participants until December 31, 2028, or until those funds are exhausted, whichever occurs sooner.

(3) (A) A liaison in a participating county shall provide all known eligible participants with program information and a county form to enroll in the program during routine initial and final communications required under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.).

(B) A liaison shall ensure that the enrollment forms are confidentially distributed to both of the following:

(i) All eligible participants 17 years of age and older.

(ii) Parents or guardians of eligible participants younger than 18 years of age.

(C) Liaisons are not required to assist an eligible participant with filling out an enrollment form.

(D) An eligible participant may apply for and participate in the program without a parent's or guardian's consent or approval, regardless of the eligible participant's age.

(b) The California SOAR Guaranteed Income Fund is hereby established as the initial depository of all moneys appropriated, donated, or otherwise received for the program. Upon appropriation by the Legislature, the department shall distribute moneys in the fund to participating counties in accordance with this chapter. The department shall administer the fund.

(c) For purposes of administering the program, the department may accept in-kind contributions, including, but not limited to, financial mentorship services for participants.

**8283.** The department shall work with at least one independent, research-based institution to identify existing, and establish new, program outcome measurements. These measurements shall inform an evaluation report. The department shall submit the evaluation report to the Legislature, pursuant to Section 9795 of the Government Code, upon the conclusion of the program. The evaluation report shall include educational and economic security outcomes for award recipients, models used, and measures specific to the objectives of the program. Notwithstanding any other law, the department may accept and, upon appropriation, expend funds from nongovernment sources for purposes of preparing the evaluation report, a longitudinal study of the program that is in addition to the report, or both.

**8284.** (a) Notwithstanding any other law, any amount received by an individual as an award through the program shall not be considered income or resources for purposes of determining the individual's, or any member of their household's, eligibility for benefits or assistance, or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, under any state or local means-tested program. With respect to a state or local program, this subdivision shall be implemented only to the extent that it does not conflict with federal law relating to that program or to the extent that any necessary waivers or exemptions are obtained pursuant to subdivision (b) and that federal financial participation, if applicable, is available and is not otherwise jeopardized.

(b) The department, in consultation with stakeholders and the Legislature, shall identify the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, the CalFresh program, the Medi-Cal program, and any other state program that implements a federal means-tested program and that would require an exemption or waiver in order for an award described in subdivision (a) to be excluded from consideration as income or resources for purposes of the federal program. Notwithstanding any other law, a state department or agency that administers a program identified by the department or that the state department or agency itself identifies shall, if possible, approve an exemption or waiver, or provide any other authority deemed necessary by the state department or agency, to exclude the award from consideration as income or resources for purposes of the federal program, or, if the state department or agency does not have that authority, shall seek a federal waiver or exemption. The state's failure to be granted a federal exemption or waiver, as described in this subdivision, shall not affect the ability of the department to administer the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program, and the department may consider alternatives to prevent adverse consequences for participants, in consultation with the Legislature and stakeholders.

**8285.** The department shall be responsible for promulgating rules and regulations governing the administration of the program and fund.

**8286.** Notwithstanding any other law:

(a) Contracts or grants awarded pursuant to this chapter are exempt from the personal services contracting requirements of Article 4 (commencing with Section 19130) of Chapter 5 of Part 2 of Division 5 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(b) Contracts or grants awarded pursuant to this chapter are exempt from the Public Contract Code and the State Contracting Manual and are not subject to the approval of the Department of General Services.

(c) Notwithstanding the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code), the department may implement, interpret, or make specific this chapter without taking any regulatory action.

**8287.** This chapter shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029, and as of that date is repealed.

**SEC. 3.** Section 10007 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

**10007.** (a) Subject to the limitations and conditions described in Section 8284, any amount received by an individual as an award through the California SOAR Guaranteed Income Program established pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8280) of Division 8 shall not be considered income or resources for purposes of determining the individual's, or any member of their household's, eligibility for benefits or assistance, or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, ~~under~~ pursuant to a state or local means-tested public social services program described in this division.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029, and as of that date is repealed.