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March 28, 2019

The Honorable Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Member of the Assembly, 16th Assembly District
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1165 (Bauer-Kahan) as Introduced on February 21,
2019
Position: Support

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan,

On behalf of the California Association of Certified Family Law Specialists, a non-profit organization with 683 members who are certified as family law specialists by the State Bar of California, Board of Legal Specialization, I write to support Assembly Bill 1165, as introduced.

AB 1165 would prohibit a person from serving as a professional supervised visitation provider if the person is required to register as a sex offender under the Sex Offender Registration Act on the basis of, among other things, a conviction for a violent or serious felony, as defined, or specified offenses related to child pornography. The bill would also require professional providers to complete a LiveScan criminal background check before providing supervised visitation services and annually thereafter. The bill would further require a professional provider to complete 24 hours of training prior to providing visitation services including at least 12 hours of classroom instruction, and would require training in conflicts of interest to cover the acceptance of gifts.

The public policy of the state of California is to protect the best interest of children whose parents have a custody or visitation matter

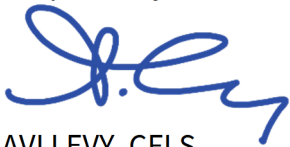
in family court. Sometimes, based on issues of protection and safety, the Courts will order that a child only have contact with a parent when a neutral third person is present during the visitation. This type of third-person visitation arrangement is often called “supervised visitation.”

A Court may order supervised visitation for many reasons, such as to give the visiting parent a chance to address specific issues; to help reintroduce a parent and a child after a long absence; to help introduce a parent and a child when there has been no existing relationship between them; when there is a history or allegations of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, or substance abuse; when there are parenting concerns or mental illness; or when there is a parental threat of abduction. Often times, the court order will also specify who will provide the supervised visitation services and where the visits will take place.

Considering their proximity to the most vulnerable people in our society, our children, ACFLS strongly believes that no person required to register as a sex offender should serve as a professional supervised visitation provider. ACFLS also strongly believes that further classroom instruction for providers and that providers submit to an annual LiveScan criminal background check would ensure children’s safety during supervised visits. If passed, AB 1165 will help ensure that a professional supervised visitation provider’s service will provide the custodial parent the reassurance that their child’s physical and emotional safety is being provided for.

For these reasons, ACFLS supports AB 1165, as introduced.

Respectfully submitted,



AVI LEVY, CFLS
Legislative Director, ACFLS