

Council gives youth a voice at Fresno City Hall

By George Hostetter
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The Fresno City Council on Thursday took the first step toward starting an advisory group focused on issues of interest to youth.

The council on a 7-0 vote approved the introduction of a law that will create the Fresno Youth Commission. The law would be adopted at a future council meeting.

The bill is co-sponsored by Council President Oliver Baines and Council Member Esmeralda Soria.

“We’re trying to find ways to invest in our youth,” Baines said.

Said Soria: “This will provide an opportunity for leadership development.”

The commission will have eight voting members and eight alternates. One of each will be appointed by the mayor and each of the seven council members.

The members and alternates must be between 15 and 21 years of age when appointed. They may serve until 23.

The term is two years. No one can serve more than two consecutive terms. Members must live in Fresno.

The commission’s duties will include the identification of needs and concerns of Fresno’s youth. It will hold public forums.

The commission also will examine social, economic, educational and recreational programs that affect Fresno’s youth. The commission will make recommendations to the council and mayor.

The commission will operate within City Hall’s jurisdiction.

No one on the council dais or in the audience had a bad word for the commission.

Soria summed up City Hall’s vision: “We want our youth to be engaged.”

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