



Date: May 30, 2019

To: The Honorable Holly Mitchell,
Chair, Budget Conference Committee

Honorable Members
Budget Conference Committee

From: Michelle Gibbons, Executive Director

**RE: 4265 CDPH Issue #43 – California Home Visiting and Black Infant Health
– SUPPORT SENATE VERSION**

The County Health Executives of Association California (CHEAC) respectfully requests your support of Senate's version of the budget to redirect General Fund resources offset by additional federal funds for local assistance funding for the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) and Black Infant Health (BIH) Program.

The California Home Visiting Program and the Black Infant Health Program provide crucial early childhood and maternal health support services necessary to better ensure positive health and social outcomes across the lifespan.

Currently, 23 local home visiting programs operate throughout the state, providing one-on-one support to pregnant and newly-parenting families in their homes who have been identified having risk factors such as domestic violence, inadequate income, unstable housing, education less than 12 years, substance abuse, and depression and/or mental illness. Local health department public health nurses or paraprofessionals work with families for the first three years of an infant's life in order to prevent child abuse and neglect, support positive parenting, improve maternal and child health, and promote child development and school readiness utilizing an evidence-based approach.

Related to the Black Infant Health Program, there are, on average, 31,000 African American babies born each year in California, of which 3,000 to 4,000 babies are born prematurely and/or with low birthweight. African American infants continue to die at more than two times the rate observed for white, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander infants. While the infant mortality rate has declined over the past two decades, some evidence has shown that progress in reducing African American infant mortality has stalled in recent years.

We appreciate the Administration and Legislature's interest and action to provide additional funding for both the California Home Visiting Program and Black Infant Health Program and urge the Budget Conference Committee to adopt the Senate's action to maximize the funding for local assistance.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (916) 327-7540.

cc: Scott Ogus, Consultant, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
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