

#CACantWait
UNTIL THE NEXT CRISIS

INVEST IN OUR LOCAL
PUBLIC HEALTH
INFRASTRUCTURE **NOW**

CA Assembly Democrats' Budget Plan Aims to Rebuild Decimated Local Public Health Infrastructure

Public health officials, county governments, frontline workers, community advocates commend plan's emphasis on investing in crucial infrastructure and workforce; say "California Can't Wait" to prepare for the next crisis

SACRAMENTO, CA -- Members of the "California Can't Wait" coalition of local public health officials, county governments, frontline health workers, and community advocates applauded California Assembly Democrats' FY 21-22 "budget blueprint" for putting a priority on significant, direct investments in county public health workforce and infrastructure.

"COVID-19 has laid bare why California must reinvest in rebuilding our local public health workforce and infrastructure. An ongoing investment in public health infrastructure is what will prepare us for the next crisis before it hits and fund crucial programs to help address health disparities that are driving increased rates of heart disease, diabetes, and STDs," said Michelle Gibbons, executive director of the County Health Executives Association of California, a statewide organization that represents county and city Health Department and Agency Directors. "CHEAC appreciates that Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, Assembly Budget Chair Phil Ting and California Assembly Democrats have recognized the value of California's local public health departments to Californians' well-being and the health of our economy."

"SEIU members have been warning for years that California wasn't investing enough in public health and that skimping on these crucial services would leave communities of color most vulnerable. After the last year's devastation, there is no question that a strong public health workforce makes a difference when lives are on the line," said Bob Schoonover, President of SEIU California and Executive Director of SEIU Local 721. "We are glad to see Assembly Democrats stepping up to lead on building a public health workforce that gives everyone in California the opportunity to be healthy, whether we are Black, Brown, white, API or Native American."

The California Can't Wait coalition is calling on Governor Newsom and lawmakers to invest \$200 million annually in local public health, beginning with the FY 21-22 State Budget, to help rebuild our local workforce and infrastructure to prepare for the next crisis before it hits. They are also asking state leaders to prioritize \$3.45 million for Assembly Bill 240 (Rodriguez) to study the long-term needs of local public health agencies.

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The California Can't Wait Coalition is led by the County Health Executives Association of California, Service Employees International Union - California, Health Officers Association of California, Public Health Advocates, California State Association of Counties, Rural County Representatives of California, and the Urban Counties of California.