

May 16, 2024

The Honorable Mike McGuire
President Pro Tempore
1021 O Street, Room 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker of the Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Scott Wiener, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: CalWORKs Home Visiting Program May Revision \$47.1 Million Ongoing Cut
POSITION: REJECT

Dear Pro Tem McGuire, Speaker Rivas, Chair Wiener, and Chair Gabriel:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we respectfully request that you reject the Governor's May Revision proposal to cut \$47.1 million ongoing from the CalWORKs Home Visiting Program. This represents a **45% cut** to the program and will substantially gut the impact of these voluntary evidence-based home visiting programs, which cost-effectively strengthens the youngest Californians and their families, while also enhancing the impacts of the CalWORKs program.

Although unmet basic needs, adverse experiences, and circumstances of economic hardship can undermine families' health and well-being, voluntary evidence-based home visiting programs (HVPs) are backed by decades of research demonstrating that they improve outcomes for both parents and children in myriad ways. Voluntary evidence-based HVPs match trained professionals with expecting and new parents to help them with critical early development for their children. Research shows that participation in a HVP has immense benefits to the child(ren) and their families, such as better maternal and infant health, reduced emergency room visits, and increased safety practices. Long term, for children who participate to age 5, research shows improved language and cognitive development, improved math and reading scores, reduced absenteeism, and decreased school suspensions. For every \$1 invested in HVPs, communities receive a benefit of up to \$5.70 in savings in child welfare, K-12 education, and community safety.¹ Ultimately, when implemented with fidelity to their model standards, these programs can generate public savings by increasing healthy births, boosting positive parenting practices, reducing child maltreatment, and increasing family self-sufficiency in the forms of adult educational attainment, career training and employment. Furthermore, home visiting programs increase the percentage of women seeing their providers for postpartum visits that are critical for the new mom and for the overlap with the baby.

California was just starting to reach major milestones, post-pandemic, in an effort to enroll families with children under five in critical programs, exponentially increasing its reach. Cutting this program will only decrease the number of families reached. Voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs are one of the best investments California can make to ensure children and families living in poverty have the opportunity to succeed.

¹ Home Visiting: Improving Outcomes for Children. <https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/home-visitingimproving-outcomes-for-children>

California can and should be expanding, not cutting, the statewide availability of voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs to strengthen and support children and families. For these reasons and more, we urge you to reject the Governor's proposed May Revision cut to the CalWORKs Home Visiting Program.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

Alliance for Children's Rights
BreastfeedLA
CAPP
Central Coast Early Childhood Advocacy Network
CHEAC
Child Care Resource Center, Inc.
Children Now
Children's Bureau
County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA)
Everychild Foundation
First 5 Alameda
First 5 Association
First 5 Fresno
First 5 Humboldt
First 5 Kings
First 5 Orange
First 5 Sacramento

First 5 San Bernardino
First 5 Santa Clara
First 5 Sonoma
First 5 Tulare
First 5 Yolo
Foothill Family
Healthy Families America
Kings County Department of Public Health
LA Best Babies Network
Maternal and Child Health Access
Multi-Ethnic Collaborative of Community Agencies
Nurse Family Partnership
Para Los Ninos
Parent As Teachers
Peace Over Violence
Shields for Families
Western Center on Law & Poverty

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Members and Staff of the Assembly Committee on Budget
Ginni Bella Navarre, Deputy Legislative Analyst, LAO
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance
Kim Johnson, Director, California Department of Social Services
Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, Health and Human Services Agency



