

# #CACantWait

## UNTIL THE NEXT CRISIS

June 24, 2024

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

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

**RE: Future of Public Health Workforce and Infrastructure Investment – SUPPORT BUDGET ACT AGREEMENT**

Dear Senator Wiener and Assembly Member Gabriel,

The undersigned organizations, representing the California Can't Wait Coalition, respectfully urge your support of the final budget act agreement which maintains \$276.1 million ongoing General Fund for state and local public health workforce and infrastructure, including \$184.1 million for local health departments. Our coalition acknowledges the difficult decisions prompted by the state's challenging budget climate, and we commend the Legislature's leadership in working to maintain these critical resources to protect and promote the health of our California communities.

With the Future of Public Health funds, local health departments throughout the state have hired more than 1,100 public health professionals, including public health nurses, disease investigators, epidemiologists, microbiologists, health equity professionals, and other skilled public health professionals. Staff positions supported by this funding have been deployed to respond to communicable disease outbreaks among unhoused and other vulnerable populations, strengthened partnerships and engagement with local stakeholders and community-based organizations, and enhanced preparedness for public health emergencies, among other critical activities.

We must acknowledge the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, especially that state and local health departments are instrumental in protecting lives, ensuring health equity, and avoiding excess social and economic disruption. Our local health departments are the first line of defense against all public health threats and rely on a highly skilled and specialized workforce supported by this funding.

We are grateful to the Legislature and Administration for maintaining a level of commitment to rebuild our state and local public health workforce and infrastructure. It is for these reasons our coalition respectfully urges your support of the final budget act agreement.

Respectfully,

*As signed by*

Michelle Gibbons  
Executive Director  
County Health Executives Association of  
California (CHEAC)

*As signed by*

Kat DeBurgh  
Executive Director  
Health Officers Association of California

*As signed by*

Beth Malinowski  
Government Relations Advocate  
SEIU California

*As signed by*

Jolie Onodera  
Senior Legislative Advocate  
California State Association of Counties

*As signed by*

Sarah Dukett  
Policy Advocate  
Rural County Representatives of California

*As signed by*

Kelly Brooks-Lindsey  
Legislative Advocate  
Urban Counties of California

*As signed by*

Harold Goldstein, DrPH  
Executive Director  
Public Health Advocates

*As signed by*

Janice O'Malley  
Legislative & Political Action Representative  
American Federation of State, County, and  
Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

*As signed by*

Ronald Coleman Baeza  
Managing Director of Policy  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN)

*As signed by*

Sebastian Perez  
Policy Committee Co-Chair  
End the Epidemics

*As signed by*

Matthew Marsom  
Chief, Programs, Policy, and Government  
Relations Officer  
Public Health Institute

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Committee  
Marjorie Swartz, Policy Consultant, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore  
Rosielyn Pulmano, Policy Consultant, Office of the Assembly Speaker  
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee  
Scott Ogus, Deputy Staff Director, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus  
Anthony Archie, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus  
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee  
Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus  
Eric Dietz, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus  
Will Owens, Fiscal & Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance  
Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, California Health & Human Services Agency  
Dr. Tomás Aragón, Director and State Public Health Officer, California Dept. of Public Health  
Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom  
Angela Pontes, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom