



Tuesday, February 12, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins
President pro Tempore
California State Senate
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell
Chair, Budget Committee
California State Senate
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Budget Committee
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom and Budget Leaders of the California State Legislature:

Re: **2019 End Child Poverty CA Budget Priorities**

The Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Task Force (Task Force) recently issued its final Report and Recommendations. We are writing, as members of the Task Force and a broad coalition of supporters, to ask that you urgently and immediately take actions to end deep childhood poverty and substantially reduce overall child and family poverty in California by implementing the Task Force Recommendations.

One in five children in California live in poverty. **We are the 5th largest economy in the world with the highest percentage and largest number of children living in poverty of any state in the Nation. This is a human and a fiscal crisis that we have the ability to solve.**

According to the **Harvard Center on the Developing Child, the toxic stress of extreme poverty has a life-long negative impact on a child's brain development.** The same research indicates that the impact can be reversed by making the proven investments recommended by the Task Force that reduce or eliminate the need for more costly remediation in the future.

The Task Force's End Child Poverty Plan is comprehensive, research-based and community-informed. When fully implemented, the Task Force recommendations will **end deep**

poverty for the 450,000 children in California living under 50% of the federal poverty line within four years and substantially reduce California's highest in the Nation level of overall child and family poverty. As children's advocates, non-profit, religious, and business organizations, we urge that the comprehensive child and family poverty plan be acted on immediately. Reducing child and family poverty by 50% will also have a net positive impact on state and local government budgets of an estimated minimum of \$12 billion annually in reduced remedial health, social service and educational expenditures and increased tax revenues.

The Governor's proposed budget is an excellent starting point to begin reducing childhood poverty, especially for children living in deep poverty. The California Legislature can take the important step to eliminate deep poverty among families with children in the short term and to reduce overall childhood poverty by fifty percent by 2023 by adopting the Task Force's science-based budget proposals. They include:

Primary Investments

- Increase grants in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program to bring families up above deep poverty as proposed in the Budget Act of 2018.
- Increase and expand access to the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- **Adopt a Targeted Child Tax Credit (TCTC)** that would put money back in the pocket of families and put it to work in the economy. This proposal also serves to provide a rental subsidy for families living in deep poverty or experiencing homelessness. Research conducted by the **Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality shows that cash or near cash subsidies have a long-term positive impact** on reducing childhood poverty and increasing the overall economic health of a community. **The TCTC alone, when fully implemented will eliminate deep child poverty within four years.**

Foundational Investments

- **Guarantee access to early care and education** for children 0–8 years of age who are living in poverty in order to support child early development and families' employment, education, health and upward mobility.
- Expand voluntary home visiting programs to support pregnant women and families with young children.
- **Add 20 state-funded Promise Neighborhoods** offering coordinated, community-driven support services.
- **Secure Healthcare for All Californians.**
- **Fully fund transitional housing programs and supports for foster care youth** up to the age of 21.

We urge these investments for the children of California today, to support the California Dream for each of our children. If you have any questions, please contact Jackie Thu-Huong Wong at jwong@grace-inc.org or 916-498-3320.

Sincerely,

GRACE	Cradle to Career Fresno County
Children Now	First 5 Alameda
Children's Defense Fund	First 5 Association of CA
County Welfare Directors Association of California	Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano County
First 5 CA	Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission
First 5 Los Angeles	Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Fresno EOC Street Saints	Good Samaritan
Home Start, Inc.	Jamestown Community Center (The)
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce	Jewish Center for Justice
St. John's Well Child and Family Center	John Burton Advocates for Youth
Western Center on Law and Poverty	JPAC - Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California
Youth Policy Institute	Lutheran Office of Public Policy- CA
Actors Gang (The)	Marin Promise Neighborhoods
Alameda County Community Food Bank	Maryvale
Alliance for Children's Rights	Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)
American Academy of Pediatrics	Mission Graduates
Barrio Logan College Institute	National Association of Social Workers
California Alternative Payment Program Association (CAPPA)	National Center for Youth Law
California Association of Food Banks	National Council for Jewish Women
California Catholic Conference	National Foster Youth Institute
California Emerging Technology Fund	Parent Voices
California Interfaith Coalition	Pathways LA
CalEITC4ME	Policy Link
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County	Rise Together Bay Area
Child Care Law Center	SALEF (Salvadorian American Leadership and Educational Fund)
Child Care Resource Center	Shields for Families
Children's Advocacy Institute	South Bay Community Services
Children's Institute	United Way Bay Area
Children's Network of Solano County	United Way California
Clinica Romero	United Way of Greater Los Angeles
Council on American-Islamic Relations	

cc: Members of the California State Legislature

