



January 4, 2010

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Sent via fax: 916-558-3160

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

We, the undersigned, urge you to restore the \$80 million General Fund appropriation that you vetoed from the current-year Child Welfare Services budget in your proposed 2010-11 budget. Failure to restore this funding will result in direct harm to the most vulnerable citizens of our state: the children and youth in California's child welfare system.

When an abused child is removed from the custody of a parent and placed into California's child welfare system, a commitment is made to care for that child. In making this commitment, the State assumes the awesome responsibility of ensuring the child's safety and well-being. In no other arena does the government play such a considerable, direct role in the personal lives of California residents.

The \$80 million Child Welfare Services cut has compromised the State's ability to responsibly fulfill this role. Counties and their nonprofit partners have responded to this cut in different ways. A number of counties have been forced to reduce social workers, the staff who on a daily basis investigate hotline referrals; work with children in foster care to reunify them with their parents or find permanent, loving homes for them; and attempt to prevent further abuse and neglect. Other impacts of this cut have included serious reductions in foster parent training and recruitment, transition planning for older youth, health care coordination, transitional housing, criminal background checks for foster care placements and family meetings to facilitate reunification.

Each of these activities plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and well-being of children and youth in California's child welfare system. Failure to responsibly execute these activities puts California at risk for a federal penalty for non-compliance with the Child and Family Services Review. It also leaves more children in harm's way, without social workers or services to help them, resulting in an increase in costs to taxpayers. Unstemmed abuse and neglect cost taxpayers an estimated \$108 billion annually in the form of higher adult rates of obesity, alcoholism, and depression; and of cancer, heart disease and diabetes, according to Prevent Child Abuse California.

California can and must do better for its abused and neglected children. Please sustain the progress California has made and protect vulnerable children's lives by restoring the \$80 million

General Fund veto to Child Welfare Services in your proposed 2010-11 budget. To discuss this further, please contact Frank Mecca of the County Welfare Directors Association of California at 916-443-1749 or Amy Lemley of the John Burton Foundation at 415-693-1322.

Sincerely,

Public Agencies & Officials (25)

Alameda County Social Services Agency
Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services
Calaveras Works and Human Services
City of Chico
Contra Costa County Independent Living Skills Program
Contra Costa County Supervisor Susan Bonilla
Del Norte County Department of Health and Human Services.
Glenn County Human Resource Agency
Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services
Imperial County Department of Social Services
Inyo County Health and Human Services
Kings County Human Services
Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
Mariposa County Human Services Department
Merced County Human Services Agency
Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services
Napa County Child Welfare Services
Placer County Health and Human Services
Riverside County Department of Public Social Services
San Francisco Human Services Agency
San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services
County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency
Siskiyou County Human Services
Stanislaus County Public Health Services CHDP/Foster Care/Lead Programs
Tuolumne County Child Welfare Services

Associations, Coalitions & National Organizations (7)

Alameda County Foster Youth Alliance
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Coalition for Parent Advocacy in Child Protective Services
California State Association of Counties
County Welfare Directors Association of California
Children's Defense Fund - California
National Center on Shared Leadership
National Coalition for Parent Advocacy in Child Protective Services

Non-Profit Organizations (83)

Abode Services - Formerly Tri-City Homeless Coalition
Fremont, CA

ACTION Council of Monterey County
Salinas, CA

A Home Within
San Francisco, CA

AJE Partners, Dion Aroner
Berkeley, CA

Alameda Family Services-DreamCatcher Youth Shelter
Oakland, CA

Alfa Homes, Inc.
San Francisco, CA

The Alliance for Children's Rights
Los Angeles, CA

Alternative Family Services
Vallejo, CA

Amador Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
Jackson, CA

A Safe Place
Oakland, CA

ASPIRAnet
Visalia, CA

Bay Area Youth Center
Hayward, CA

Beyond Emancipation
Oakland, CA

Caring S.H.O.S., Inc.
Stanton, CA

Casa de Amparo
Oceanside, CA

Changing the Health of Adolescents Impacting the Nation Reaction, Inc.
Los Angeles, CA

Charlee Family Care, Inc.
Yucaipa, CA

Child & Family Institute
Sacramento, CA

Children's Hope FFA/Center for Hope THP-Plus
Yuba City, CA

Community Housing Partnership
San Francisco

Corporation for Supportive Housing
Los Angeles, CA

Covenant House California
Hollywood, CA

David & Margaret Youth and Family Services
La Verne, CA

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Berkeley, CA

EMQ FamiliesFirst
Campbell, CA

Environmental Alternatives
Quincy, CA

EPA CAN DO
East Palo Alto, CA

Family and Youth Services
Stockton, CA

First Place for Youth
Oakland, CA

Five Acres The Boys' and Girls' Aid Society of Los Angeles
Altadena, CA

Fred Finch Youth Center
Oakland, CA

Folsom Lake College
Sacramento, CA

Guardian Scholars Program
California State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, CA

Happy Faces Foster Family Agency
Banning, CA

Huckleberry Youth Programs
San Francisco, CA

iFoster.org
Sacramento, CA

Inland Temporary Homes
Loma Linda, CA

Japanese Community Youth Council
San Francisco, CA

John Burton Foundation for Children without Homes
San Francisco, CA

John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation
Palm Desert, CA

Journey House Inc.
Pasadena, CA. 91104

Juma Ventures
Oakland, CA 94610

Legal Advocates for Children & Youth
San Jose, CA

Lincoln Child Center
Oakland, CA 94602

Lutheran Social Services of Southern California
Orange, CA

Mariposa Safe Families, Inc.
Mariposa County, CA

Mary Graham Children's Foundation
French Camp, CA

Murrell's Farm and Boys Home
Lancaster, CA

National Center for Youth Law
Oakland, CA

New Alternatives, Inc.
San Diego, CA

New Direction of Humboldt Foster Parent Association
Humboldt County, CA

Operation SafeHouse
Riverside, CA

Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services
Los Angeles, CA

Orangewood Children's Foundation
Santa Ana, CA

Parents Anonymous Inc.
Claremont, CA

Peacock Acres Inc.
Salinas CA

Prime Property Investments
Sacramento, CA 95821

Redwood Children's Services
Ukiah, CA

Redwood Community Action Agency
Eureka, CA 95501

River Stones Residential Services Inc.
Redlands, CA

San Francisco Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
San Francisco, CA

San Gabriel Children's Center, Inc.
Glendora, CA

Santa Clara County Office of Education Foster Youth Services
San Jose, CA

St. Anne's
Los Angeles, CA

Seneca Center for Children and Families
San Leandro, CA

Silicon Valley Children's Fund

San Jose, CA

The Smith Renaissance Society at UC Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, CA

Stew's Love N Care Inc.
Oakland, CA

Strengthening Families All Around the World, Inc.
Claremont, CA

Sun Valley Foster Parent Association
Fresno, CA

T&T House of Champion, Inc
San Francisco Bay Area, CA

Thornhill & Associates, Inc.
Chatsworth, CA

Triad Family Services
Sacramento, CA

Unity Fellowship Social Justice Ministries
Los Angeles, CA

Victor Community Support Services, Inc.
Stockton, CA

Victor Treatment Centers, Inc.
Chico, CA

Village of Childhelp West
Beaumont, California

WestCoast Children's Clinic
Oakland, CA

YWCA Santa Monica / Westside
Santa Monica, CA 90405

YMCA Youth & Family Services
Santa Barbara, CA

Youth for Change
Chico, CA

Youth Homes, Inc.
Walnut Creek, CA 94596