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**Senate President pro Tempore
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California State Senate
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Senator Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal
Review Committee
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

March 12, 2024

RE: Proposed Cuts in Governor's January Budget

Dear Legislative Leaders,

In light of our state budgetary challenges, this Alliance wrote to you on February 14, 2024, outlining a general set of principles for an equitable California budget. The principles we outlined supported our strong belief that our state budget should be a roadmap to building a more just and inclusive society where race, immigration status, income, housing affordability, or zip code do not limit our life prospects.

With growing concern over the latest revised projected budget shortfall of \$73 billion by the LAO, we write to you today with even greater urgency about the direction our state is headed in and what it means for our most vulnerable communities.

First and foremost, we urge you to both close more prisons and to identify and evaluate all tax giveaways that benefit the wealthy and corporations for fairness, equity, and effectiveness. In addition, these expenditures should be subject to annual review and renewal requirements.

Second, we urge you to reject the list of proposed cuts and deferrals outlined below. This list speaks to the broad diversity of our Alliance, as these proposed cuts and deferrals work against our shared vision of a California for all.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

We urge you to reject the following:

- Reduction of \$40 million for the Public Defense Pilot Program.
- Delay for Flexible Cash Assistance for Survivors of Crime.
- Pause for the Adult Reentry Grant.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND JUSTICE

- We urge you to restore critical funding for climate equity programs that build water and climate resilience. These programs are integral to achieving California's ambitious climate and equity goals, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting disadvantaged communities, which disproportionately bear the burdens of the climate crisis:
 - \$160 million to the Community Resilience Centers program at the Strategic Growth Council that was cut in 2023.
 - \$200 million to the Transformative Climate Communities program at the Strategic Growth Council that was cut in 2023.
 - \$283 million to the Equitable Building Decarbonization program at the California Energy Commission that was proposed to be cut in the January Budget Proposal.
 - \$9.8 million to the Regional Climate Collaboratives program at the Strategic Growth Council that was proposed to be cut in the January Budget Proposal.
 - \$200 million for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure that was delayed in 2023.

HOUSING

- Reject \$1.2 billion in cuts to core affordable housing programs - specifically cuts to the Multifamily Housing Program, the Foreclosure Intervention Housing Preservation Program, the Infill Infrastructure Grants Program, CalHome, the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program, and the Regional Early Action Planning Program 2.0.
- Maintain \$1 billion for Homeless, Housing, Assistance & Prevention Program (HHAP).
- Reject all cuts to critical Department of Social Service programs that

provide housing stabilization for older adults, foster youth, CalWorks recipients, and adults with disabilities.

IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE JUSTICE AND INTEGRATION

- Reject \$15.2 million in cuts to TPS and CSU Immigration Legal Services Programs.

INCOME AND FOOD SECURITY

We must not forget lessons from the Great Recession: [austerity cuts to safety net programs are proven to fail by increasing costs](#). Cuts made now will take years - if not more than a decade - to reverse, meanwhile bringing human suffering to California's poorest. The budget is a statement of our values and must continue to prioritize the [nearly 1 in 3 Californians living in or near poverty](#).

- Reject the double-cut of \$900 million Safety Net Reserve total withdrawal, and \$300 million in ongoing, permanent CalWORKs cuts, including:
 - Family Stabilization Program
 - Extended Subsidized Employment
 - Intensive Case Management
 - Single Allocation that supports public sector workers
- Reject cuts to eliminate several foster youth programs:
 - Family Urgent Response System
 - Supervised Independent Living Placement supplement
 - Housing Navigation and Management Program
 - LA County Child Welfare Services Public Health Nursing Program.
- Reject proposed budget cut of \$33.2 million for CA Nutrition Incentive Program.

WORKERS RIGHTS

- Reject the transfer of \$125 million from the Labor & Workforce Development Fund (LWDF - devoted to outreach & education about workplace rights) to the General Fund.
- Reject the \$45 million cut for the High Road Training Partnerships program at the California Workforce Development Board.

Thank you for taking the time to hear our concerns. We look forward to working with you and have enclosed a directory of Alliance member organizations and

staff who are available to you as a resource on an array of policy issues.

Sincerely,

Building the California Dream Alliance

- ACLU California Action
- Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (ABMoC)
- California Coalition for Worker Power
- California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) Action
- California Food and Farming Network
- California Immigrant Policy Center
- Californians for Safety and Justice
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, CHIRLA
- Courage California
- Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
- Friends Committee on Legislation of California
- GRACE/End Child Poverty California
- Housing California
- Housing Now!
- Indivisible CA: StateStrong
- Initiate Justice
- Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the SF Bay Area
- Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
- Lutheran Office of Public Policy-California
- PICO California
- Smart Justice California
- United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Western States Council
- Western Center on Law & Poverty

CC:

Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Department of Finance
Legislative Analyst's Office