

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

May 21, 2012

Honorable Mark Leno, Chair
Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Leno:

We the undersigned legislative Members believe advocating for women and children in the budget process is of the utmost importance. We believe the preservation of the safety net for children is essential and that the state needs to encourage people to work, not put up additional barriers for working families.

We believe the following proposed 2012-13 state budget actions related to child development will adversely affect working families:

- Restructuring of the child care delivery system changing the single state agency from the California Department of Education (CDE) to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- Excessive reductions to child development services and other targeted policy changes

Oppose Any Restructuring of the Child Care Delivery System

California has a long history of support for child care through the education system. Moving child care services out of education will not only impact efforts to close the achievement gap for thousands of the most at-risk California children but it will also move us away from the direction of federal early care and education policy.

The CalWORKs three-stage child care system was intentionally designed to be a part of California's overall child development and education system. The goal was to serve CalWORKs recipient families who need child care in the same way that all families in California access child care information and services. CDE is the appropriate place to manage an integrated child care system including child care for contracted Title 5 centers, stage 2, stage 3, General Alternative Payment program and State preschool.

This policy shift produces no foreseeable achieved savings and will be disruptive in the lives of struggling families.

Child Development has Been Reduced

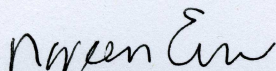
Since 2008, the child development system has taken a reduction in funding from \$2.7 billion to \$2 billion (excluding Stage 1 child care) or a 26% cut with a loss of over 107,000 child care slots. The May Revision includes another \$452.5 million in reductions.

Over the past few years, the child care delivery system, and the children and families they serve, have endured extensive disruption of services while families continue to strive toward self-sufficiency. Targeted policy changes will further disrupt the lives of countless families and provide for inequitable reductions across the state. We oppose the restrictions on the kinds of activities that qualify parents for subsidized care and the new proposal to drastically reduce reimbursement rates.

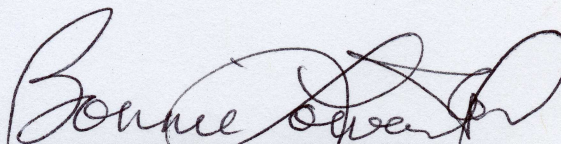
While we acknowledge the dire economic realities facing California today, we are also aware that child care services provide the link to economic recovery for the state in supporting families' ability to obtain and retain employment.

The undersigned legislative Members have confidence that you, as legislative budget leaders, will take into account the needs of women and children when reviewing this budget. We are hopeful that you will align your position on these items with the needs of California's working families. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

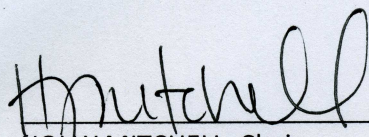
Respectfully,



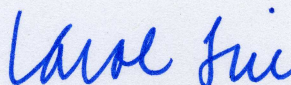
NOREEN EVANS, Chair
Legislative Women's Caucus
2nd Senate District



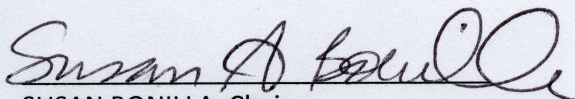
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cc: Assemblymember Bob Blumenfield, Chair – Assembly Committee on Budget