



**COUNTY OF  
SAN BERNARDINO**

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Director of Legislative Affairs

March 22, 2010

Members, Assembly and Senate Budget Committees  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Restoration of Child Welfare Services Cuts - SUPPORT**

Honorable Members:

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors supports the restoration of Child Welfare Services funding. As you know, Governor Schwarzenegger cut \$120 million (\$80 million of which came from State General Funds) from Child Welfare Services in the 2010-11 budget proposal to the legislature. The Governor first made this reduction as a line-item veto in 2009 and has sustained the cut in his proposed budget, released in January.

The Governor's cut has dramatically reduced services across multiple programs, which together, form the backbone of California's child welfare system. The cut translates into a mere 0.4% savings in the entire state budget, but this seemingly small cut is already yielding devastating consequences for vulnerable children and their families and ultimately shifts the financial burden of caring for them to other state programs:

Statewide, the veto reduced funding for nearly 400 child welfare workers tasked with the critical job of keeping children safe. As a result, counties have been unable to adequately staff child abuse hotlines, investigate allegations of child abuse, assist families to safely prevent the removal of children, and work with families to safely reunify children or find permanent, loving homes for children who cannot be reunified. In addition, the cuts abandon those who "age out" of foster care, jeopardize millions in federal funds and add costs to future California budgets.

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. For these reasons, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors supports the restoration of Child Welfare Services funding. The Board thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

**GARY C. OVITT**  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors