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February 24, 2026

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dawn Addis
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1
1021 O Street, Suite 4120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 4260 – Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Budget Items: CCS County Administration Funding Request

Dear Senator Menjivar and Assemblymember Addis,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to request that the Legislature provide adequate funding to counties to administer the California Children's Services (CCS) Program in accordance with DHCS staffing standards.

California local health departments administer the CCS Program on behalf of DHCS, serving some of the state's most medically complex and vulnerable children and youth. County CCS allocations to Kern County support core program responsibilities, including eligibility determination, care coordination and case management, medical therapy services, and services to assist in the transition to the adult system of care.

Over the past decade, the CCS Program has faced persistent budgetary and fiscal challenges due to chronic underfunding that does not reflect DHCS's own staffing standards. Statewide, current CCS allocations fall approximately \$109 million below funding levels required to meet DHCS staffing standards for the program. In Kern County, the DHCS staffing standard would provide an allocation of \$16,725,136, yet DHCS only provides \$6,764,097.

Kern County is already understaffed in accordance with DHCS staffing standards. This results in a delay in eligibility determination, which at times results in a delay in CCS patients receiving care. Additionally, this delays reimbursement to the healthcare agencies providing services to CCS patients. Furthermore, due to a lack of staffing in our Medical Therapy Units, we currently have a waitlist of 62 patients awaiting initiation of their prescribed therapy services.

February 24, 2026

Page 2 of 2

In addition to these ongoing funding shortfalls, counties anticipate increased costs associated with CCS clients who may lose Medi-Cal coverage as the result of the implementation of H.R. 1 and/or recent state policy changes. Importantly, these increased costs are not reflected in the Governor's January budget proposal.

Kern County Public Health remains committed to serving our county's most medically complex and vulnerable children and youth. However, counties require adequate and stable funding to maintain the infrastructure and staffing necessary to serve this highly vulnerable population. We respectfully request the Legislature fund county CCS programs in accordance with DHCS staffing standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. Should you have any questions, please contact our Public Health Director Brynn Carrigan at brynn@kerncounty.com or by phone at (661)868-0299.

Respectfully,



Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
Marjorie Swartz, Consultant, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón
Rosielyn Pulmano, Consultant, Office of Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
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Joe Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance (DOF)
Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Paula Villescaz, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Kim Johnson, Secretary, California Health & Human Services (CalHHS) Agency
Michelle Baass, Director, California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
Michelle Gibbons, Executive Director, County Health Executives Association of California
Jason Constantouros, Principal Fiscal & Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Kern County Public Health Department
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