

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

Phillip Peters District 1
Chris Parlier..... District 2
Jeff Flores..... District 3
David Couch District 4
Leticia Perez..... District 5



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

May 27, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: IHSS Fiscal Penalty Trailer Bill Language - OPPOSE

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to the new IHSS trailer bill provisions that would impose a 10% withholding of 1991 Realignment funds on counties that do not reach an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) collective bargaining agreement within the timelines established in the bill. While we remain fully committed to the IHSS program and deeply value the critical care it provides to seniors and individuals with disabilities, these new penalty provisions disregard the substantial progress counties have made in good-faith bargaining and would significantly undermine funding for other essential Realignment programs.

Kern County recognizes IHSS as a vital program that keeps vulnerable residents safely in their homes and reduces the need for far more expensive institutional care. Our county social workers, Public Authority staff, and IHSS providers work tirelessly to support this mission. However, the proposed 10% Realignment withholding, which is an even more punitive approach than prior proposals, would redirect millions of dollars away from other locally delivered services. These reductions would jeopardize core Realignment programs, including child welfare, adult protective services, behavioral health, and public health. Such an outcome would harm the very individuals and families the State and counties jointly strive to protect.

Under the trailer bill, a county could fully comply with all bargaining laws, negotiate in good faith, and offer wage increases aligned with what is fiscally responsible. Yet if the provider union declines those proposals, regardless of the county's efforts, a county could still be penalized with a substantial realignment withholding once the factfinding process concludes. This structure would give one bargaining party disproportionate leverage and effectively coerce specific outcomes in local labor negotiations. It replaces true collective bargaining with a state-directed result and erodes local control that counties have long been responsible for exercising.

If the state intends to mandate outcomes in IHSS wage negotiations or establish higher statewide compensation standards, then the appropriate approach would be to assume responsibility for IHSS collective bargaining and provide dedicated state funding to support mandated increases. Penalizing

counties that are already struggling with significant fiscal pressures is not an appropriate mechanism for advancing this policy goal.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the removal of the IHSS fiscal penalty provisions from the trailer bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange