State Budget Priorities 2022
March 2022

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 State Budget, Governor Newsom highlighted significant new investments for low and moderate income Californians through expanding child care, health care, housing, education, and supports for immigrants, people experiencing homelessness and working families. Many programs build upon the investments made in the 2021 Budget Act, and further expand services available to those who need it most. As in FY21-22, the State has considerable surplus funds to sustain and enhance programs, though a significant portion of funds are allocated to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency.

County Sponsored Legislative Proposals

- **CDA Supportive Services:** Alameda County SSA is leading a statewide budget request of $32.25M one-time over three years to support Case Management and Home Visiting programs for seniors.

County Supported Legislative Proposals

- **CalFresh Administration Funding Patch:** This would provide $60 million General Fund (GF) investment annually in the CalFresh program until the budget methodology for county administration is updated so that counties' determinations of CalFresh eligibility can be conducted timely and accurately as more Californians seek to access CalFresh benefits.

- **APS Training Funding: Support $4.6M Annual State General Fund:** This proposal would provide $4.6 million GF on an annual basis to continue and increase statewide training of social work staff in the Adult Protective Services (APS) program and for County Public Administrators/Guardians/Conservators (PA/PG/PC).

- **Workforce Building Capacity for MSW Social Workers:** This budget request would provide $118 million in GF to increase the number and diversity of Masters-level social workers in California available to serve children served by county child welfare departments and older adults served by APS.

- **Resource Family Approval (RFA) Funding in Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) True Up:** This is a budget request for $100 million GF annually to fund the net county costs of the RFA process, a statewide requirement imposed by the CCR legislation that is a critical component of our system of family-based care.

- **Child Welfare Services (CWS) Package to Build Upon CCR:** This is a request for $221.6 million in GF to support foster children, youth, families and caregivers that will stabilize the current service array and better enable us to reach the goals of CCR.

- **County Public Guardian and Public Conservator (PG-C) Services:** This budget item would provide $200 million ongoing to fund County Public Guardian and Public Conservator (PG-C) services to address critical staffing shortages and prevent greater human suffering for people with severe mental illness, severe cognitive deficits, people who are seriously and persistently mentally ill and homeless, and adults who have been victimized and exploited.

- **Emergency Services and Disaster Response:** This would provide $159 million in General Fund (GF) investment to provide every county with funding for full-time employees and training dedicated to coordinating emergency planning, response and recovery support.

Alameda County SSA recommends the following priorities for sustained support:

- **Enhance Support from Public Assistance Benefits**
  - **Medi-Cal – Health for All**: The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated health disparities among vulnerable populations with underlying medical conditions. According to the Department of Public Health's findings associating reported COVID-19 cases and deaths by race and ethnicity, Latinos

account for 48% of the state's cases and 45% of the state's deaths from COVID-19. Support expanding Medi-Cal to all income-eligible Californians, regardless of immigration status.

o **Medi-Cal – Enhance Affordability**: Support the Governor's proposal to reduce Medi-Cal premiums for pregnant women, children, and people with disabilities.

o **CalWORKs and the Young Child Tax Credit – Maintain Support for Vulnerable Families:** Support the Governor's proposal to increase the CalWORKs Maximum Aid Payment by 7.1%, and the proposal to expand the Young Child Tax Credit to those with zero earned income. Support increasing CalWORKs grants so that no child lives below the poverty level.

o **Food for All:** The FY 2021-22 Budget Act provided funding for the expansion of the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP), to undocumented Californians who are not eligible for federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regardless of immigration status, but limits the expansion to individuals aged 55 or older. More than half of children in undocumented families live in poverty. Support expanding CFAP to include all Californians regardless of immigration status.

o **Child Care for All**: The County supports expanded, stable and equitable access to child care through a robust mixed delivery system to safe, healthy and high quality early learning environments. The County uplifts increased reimbursement rates, expanded development of a viable career pipeline and bolstered investments to improve child care facilities infrastructure. The County supports permanency of the flexibilities made available through the Alameda County Individual Subsidized Child Care Pilot.

- **Provide Ongoing Supports for Individuals and Families At Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness**
While investments in programs for people experiencing homelessness have been considerable, many of the services are funded on a one-time or limited basis. Ensure ongoing funding for programs targeted to families, youth, and older adults.

- **Provide Adequate Funding for Family First Prevention Services**
Ensure ongoing funding to implement federal programs to build locally driven services and supports for children, youth and families at risk of entering foster care.

- **Provide Adequate Funding for the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)**
Counties need adequate funding to successfully implement CCR. Additional resources could help improve outcomes for children in foster care by reducing caregiver turnover and increasing the number of qualified caregivers available to provide stable and loving homes. On-going supports are needed for child and family teams, resource family approvals, mental health services, and a continued focus on home-based, family care placements with supportive services rather than group home settings.

- **Increase Funding and Supports for Survivors of Human Trafficking**
Commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and youth is a national and statewide epidemic that needs to be addressed. Additional support is needed to address the immediate needs of commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) and trafficked youth, and to provide long-term services to assist victims in achieving positive outcomes in well-being.

- **Invest in Safety-Net Programs for Older Adults**
In California, 21 percent of those age 65 or older live in poverty. To give older adults the support they need to live safe and healthy lives in their communities, it is of utmost importance to continue funding in aging services infrastructures, including funding for implementing the Master Plan on Aging: Adult Day Services, Adult Protective Services, Alzheimer's Disease Research and Prevention, California Community Transitions, Caregiver Resource Centers, Long-Term Services and Supports, Affordable Housing with Necessary Accommodations, Home Safe, and, Older Californians Act Programs: Senior Nutrition, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, and Fall Prevention. Alameda County supports funding for supportive services programs, including case management and visiting programs.

- **Adequately Fund Adult Protective Services (APS)**
  APS services have been expanded to include those who are aged 60 and over. While this expansion is critical to align the program with other services for older adults – and to reach vulnerable older adults earlier – adequate funding is needed to ensure necessary staffing and resources are available to reach all of those in need.

- **Restore Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) Benefits**
  Deep cuts to SSI/SSP have compromised the ability of low-income seniors and people with disabilities to afford necessities, such as housing and groceries. While the restoration of the SSP COLA in the 2021 Budget Act was a step in the right direction, monthly payments remain below their pre-Great Recession levels.

- **Equity, Quality Jobs, and High Road Employment**
  The COVID-19 pandemic unveiled deeply entrenched inequities baked into the economy for workers of color, women, front-line workers, immigrants, and lower wage earners. As we strive toward economic justice for all workers, restoring work place protections, job quality, living and thriving wages, and opportunities for upward career mobility, will be critical aspects in California's resilient economy. The prioritization of high road employment can offer on-ramps to quality jobs with equity-focused employer partners that invest in workers as an overall business growth strategy.

- **Preparing Workers for the Future**
  Equipping workers and job seekers with future-oriented, transferrable, and adaptable skills, while empowering worker's autonomy and sense of agency in their careers, will boost labor market confidence and overall economic resiliency. Preparing for the future of work also means upskilling workers that may be at-risk for automation/artificial intelligence (AI) displacement, calibrating services and program strategies toward climate resiliency, and actively partnering with key stakeholders to address workforce shortages in health care, behavioral health, child care/early childhood education, and in the goods movement sector.

- **Support Immigrant Communities**
  While the federal proposal to expand the definition of 'public charge' in immigration policy has been withdrawn, immigrant communities continue to have concerns about the impact accessing public services may have on their current or future status. Support the Governor's proposal to provide grants to local governments to help restore trust and assist immigrants in navigating state and local services.