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Poverty Epidemic Will Continue Dragging Down Recovery

Lack of Strategic Solutions to Help Children and Families Disappointing

SACRAMENTO – Frank Mecca, Executive Director of the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), issued the following statement on Governor Jerry Brown's 2014-15 May Revision:

“California will never truly achieve long-term economic health so long as nearly one in four children in our state live in poverty. While we appreciate the many ways the Governor's fiscal prudence has put California back on track, millions of families are still waiting for the recovery to hit home. The May Revision, unfortunately, does not bring much hope for them.

Despite their best efforts, many families simply cannot make ends meet. Access to health care is critically important, as county social service agencies have seen with more than 1.1 million people eagerly signing up for Medi-Cal under the Affordable Care Act, and thousands more people still seeking health care coverage assistance from us. But experts agree – access to health and education only makes up part of a child's successful development. Children can't prosper if they are hungry, homeless, and watching their parents deal with child care dilemmas and other stress each day.

Our poverty epidemic will remain a drag on our economy and an ongoing shame that Californians, the Legislature and the Governor cannot afford to put off another day.

The good news is we know there are many proven, research-based solutions that would dramatically improve the well-being of low-income children and families – investments that would pay off for all Californians.

We are eager to continue working with the Governor and Legislature on investing in those strategies that meet the intertwined goals of lifting families out of poverty and ensuring California's economic health.”

The County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) is a nonprofit association representing the human service directors from each of California's 58 counties. The Association's mission is to promote a human services system that encourages self-sufficiency of families and communities, and protects vulnerable children and adults from abuse and neglect. www.cwda.org

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