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Proposed \$1.4 Billion Cut to CalWORKs Devastating to Children

State's Best Poverty-Fighting Program Needed Now More than Ever

SACRAMENTO – The County Welfare Directors Association of California's Executive Director Frank Mecca released the following statement on Governor Brown's release today of the proposed 2012-13 budget:

"We know the Governor has difficult choices to make, and we appreciate his continued acknowledgment and push for adequate revenue, balanced with cuts, to meet the essential needs of all Californians.

But given that California continues to struggle with a recession, high unemployment rates, and a childhood poverty rate of 22%, the more than \$1 billion in cuts to CalWORKs are deeply troubling. Children and families who are already living in poverty will struggle even more to have their basic food and housing needs met. Studies show children who fall into poverty during economic recessions are more likely to become adults plagued by poverty, earning less themselves, achieving lower levels of education, and reporting poorer health.

Reducing children and families' time for receiving assistance from 48 months to just 24 months will be devastating to families, particularly when jobs simply don't exist in California and families have no other choice but to turn to us for assistance.

CalWORKs has repeatedly been cut in recent years – most recently an 8% grant reduction that took effect July 1, and a time limit reduction from 60 months to 48 months. The result is increased homelessness and more children falling deeper into poverty.

The value of CalWORKs has become even more apparent during this economic crisis, and now is the time to ensure the only program standing between children and abject poverty is shored up, not further sliced."

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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