



CWDA
Advancing Human Services
for the Welfare of *All* Californians

925 L Street, Suite 350
Sacramento, CA 95814
p: 916.443.1749 | f: 916.443.3202
cwda.org

May 18, 2016

To: The Honorable Holly Mitchell
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3

Honorable Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3

From: Frank J. Mecca, Executive Director

**RE: FUNDING FOR CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM
WORKLOAD**

The County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) respectfully requests an additional \$5.9 million General Fund for implementation and ongoing workload required by AB 403 (Statutes of 2015), which established the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). We have worked closely with the Administration since the release of the Governor's Budget in January to refine workload assumptions associated with AB 403 to ensure the success of CCR. We are in agreement with the exception of two critical areas regarding a portion of the Child and Family Teams (CFTs) workload and the costs of Resource Family Approval (RFA) implementation.

Assembly Bill 403 requires that each child in an out-of-home placement have a CFT, which is a multidisciplinary team, including the foster youth, when appropriate, and his or her caregiver, for case planning purposes and ongoing assessment of the foster youth's needs. The frequency of CFT meetings and the duration of those meetings will vary depending on the needs of the child. The May Revision assumes that urgent-need cases will require, on average, six, ten-hour CFT sessions per year; high-need cases will require, on average, three, eight-hour sessions per year; the most stable cases will require, on average, two, five-hour sessions per year; and the remaining cases, which is the majority, will require, on average two, six-hour sessions per year.

For the majority of cases, CWDA agrees with the assumption of the frequency of CFT sessions, but we disagree with the six-hour duration of each session that is assumed in the May Revision and believe that a more appropriate assumption is eight hours. Based on current experience in some counties with teaming, county practitioners developed assumptions of what activities would be required for successful CFTs and how long those activities would take, and staff at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) concurred. Based on those assumptions, the amount of time needed per CFT for most cases is 10 hours. This includes six hours for facilitation, which is a critical component for effective

teaming, and four hours of case work.

CWDA is requesting that the Legislature fund eight hours per CFT for the majority of cases, which is less than the ideal of 10 hours, but more than the May Revision assumption of six. Six hours would only fund the facilitation time and provide no time for case work. CWDA believes that eight hours is at least sufficient to enable time for both adequate facilitation and case work on each CFT. The amount of additional General Fund needed to increase the duration of CFTs to eight hours for the majority of cases is \$3.4 million in 2016-17.

As with CFTs, CWDA and CDSS worked closely on the workload assumptions associated with RFA implementation and are in agreement. County practitioners in the pilot counties that have already begun implementation of RFA informed that work as well. However, the Administration is underfunding the actual cost of that work by funding the additional workload at the 2000-01 budgeted amount for county social workers. The terms of Proposition 30, which was enacted in 2012 and included the realignment of all child welfare and foster care programs to counties, requires that the State fund the actual county-by-county costs of all new child welfare and foster care workload associated with new state laws and requirements enacted after 2011. AB 403 requires statewide implementation of RFA in all counties beginning January 1, 2017. Therefore, under the terms of Proposition 30, the State is required to fund the actual cost of the additional RFA work imposed by AB 403, which requires that the social worker cost be funded at the current amount. The May Revision funds the workload associated with CFTs at the appropriate social worker cost. The workload associated with RFA implementation should be as well. The amount of additional General Fund needed to increase the social worker funding for RFA implementation is \$2.4 million in 2016-17.

Counties are committed to the successful implementation of CCR and to realizing its ongoing promise. It is critical that the workload necessary to achieve these goals be adequately funded. The amount of additional General Fund that we are requesting is not large, but the foundational assumptions upon which that additional funding is based are essential. Thank you for your consideration of our \$5.9 million General Fund request.

cc: Jennifer Troia, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
Craig Cornett, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
Theresa Pena, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Chantele Denny, Senate Republican Fiscal
Luan Huynh, Office of Senator Holly Mitchell
Will Lightbourne, Department of Social Services
Robert Smith, Department of Social Services
Michael Wilkening, Health and Human Services Agency
Jay Kapoor, Department of Finance
Mark Newton, Legislative Analyst's Office
Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office
Ben Johnson, Legislative Analyst's Office
Farrah McDaid-Ting, California State Association of Counties
County Caucus