



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 9, 2014

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Budget Misses Opportunities to End Poverty *Strategic Solutions Can Help Children and Families, Optimize State's Economic Recovery*

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 State Budget proposal:

"While health care and education are important ways we change the lives of low-income children and families, the budget misses opportunities to address the plague of poverty and inequality with critical solutions that would improve the well-being of children and ensure the long-term economic health of California.

Despite California's improving economy, we still have the highest child poverty rate in the country. Research has well-documented the short and long-term prospects for children who live in poverty – poor performance in schools, chronic health issues, and significant effects on brain development.

Children can't take advantage of education and other opportunities when they are hungry, homeless, and their parents can't work because they don't have child care. And the cost of poverty is immense for all Californians and our economy – staggering costs to health, social services and corrections, and billions of dollars annually in lost productivity.

We look forward to working with the Governor and Legislature on strategic, proven approaches to address poverty and inequality – such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and adequate child care and employment training support – so that we can optimize our state's economic recovery and ensure it reaches all Californians."

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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