

# GRACE & End Child Poverty California Support Budget That Protects the Safety Net, Commit to Further Advocacy

*Urge Adoption of Budget That Protects Safety Net and Continued Action to Ensure Equitable Revenues Needed to End Child Poverty in California*

PASADENA, CALIF., UNITED STATES, June 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Statement attributable to Shimica Gaskins, President & CEO, GRACE & End Child Poverty California (ECPCA):

This weekend, Governor Newsom and California legislative leaders announced the [2024-25 state budget agreement](#), which demonstrates the shared values to prioritize the proven safety net programs that support Californians experiencing poverty. Impacted parents and children bravely spoke up and advocated for the outcomes achieved in this agreement, and thankfully the Governor and legislative leaders heeded their call.

The agreement reflects a commitment to reject failed austerity and prioritize proven anti-poverty programs. The safety net is even more important during challenging economic times, safeguarding families – disproportionately Black, Brown, Immigrant, and Indigenous – who are hit hardest by rising costs of basic needs and who, unlike their wealthier peers, rely more on public programs as a result.

Governor Newsom; Senate President Pro Tem McGuire; Assembly Speaker Rivas; Budget Chairs Gabriel and Wiener; and Subcommittee Chairs Alvarez, Jackson, Laird, Menjivar, Padilla, Quirk-Silva, and Weber deserve praise for the agreement that prevents permanent and irreversible harm to children living in poverty.

“This budget walks the walk to put our values first, making difficult choices that prioritize the most vulnerable Californians,” said Shimica Gaskins, President & CEO. “We applaud Governor Newsom and legislative leaders for preserving vital safety net programs that provide cash, child care, food, health care, and other supportive services. This budget learns the lesson that [austerity is a failed policy](#) and sets the new standard that the anti-poverty safety net must be protected during a deficit.”

Despite the looming deficit, California’s leaders demonstrated their shared values to prioritize ending child poverty, including:

- The Governor’s budget critically protected core cash grants in CalWORKs and SSI/SSP and

supported healthy school meals for all and the Summer EBT program, the first new federal entitlement in a generation.

- The Legislature's budget rejected cuts that would have meant irreversible harm to children and families by restoring life-saving programs across CalWORKs, child care, IHSS, CalFresh, and other vital anti-poverty programs.

The budget also includes important actions to continue increasing workers' wages. Increasing wages is fundamental to reducing poverty, by moving families beyond eligibility for public benefits and toward the middle class. Furthermore, it maintains the Summer Bridge Fund, keeping classified providers at schools and reinforcing summer wages for school meal providers who are essential to maintaining California's nation-leading universal school meals and other child nutrition programs.

Despite these significant wins for families, the final budget includes disappointing provisions such as:

- Missing a key opportunity to timely build on the Governor's leadership to pursue federal CalWORKs pilots with family-centered changes that align with [federal guidance calling for innovations](#) to "re-envision" employment and training to meet families' unique needs,
- Delaying Food For All for older adults regardless of immigration status to 2027,
- Cutting Free Tax Prep Assistance Education & Outreach for low-income tax credits in half to \$10M, and
- Drawing down the entire \$900M Safety Net Reserve over the two-year budget window.

Finally, actions to find savings from smart solutions to public safety to deactivate housing units in prisons and some actions to temporarily limit corporate tax breaks are to be applauded. The Governor and Legislature must permanently make California's revenue system more equitable by ensuring wealthy corporations pay their fair share.

While it is disappointing that this budget hasn't provided the opportunity to do even more to end child poverty, this agreement crucially preserves progress and prevents devastating cuts, setting the new standard for budgets during future deficits. The significant actions taken during this administration toward the Governor's North Star to end child poverty underscore that the constraints this year are from limited resources, not a lack of commitment.

As this budget moves to implementation, we look forward to working with all stakeholders to build on the actions in this agreement toward a California where every child is valued and free.

GRACE/ECPCA full 2024-25 Budget summary and analysis coming soon.

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