



# Legislature Restores \$40 Million for LGBTQ+ Health Equity Programs in State Budget

*California LGBTQ+ Leaders Call on Governor Newsom to Maintain Health Equity Funding in Final Budget Agreement*

SACRAMENTO, CA, UNITED STATES, June 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The California Health Equity Coalition strongly commends the State Legislature for taking decisive action to restore more than \$40 million in previously proposed budget cuts to the California Department of Public Health's Office of Health Equity (CDPH-OHE). This funding reversal safeguards dozens of vital programs currently providing services to LGBTQ+ communities across the state.

The Governor's May Revision of the 2025–26 State Budget had proposed eliminating funding for several groundbreaking health initiatives: the California Reducing Disparities Project (CRDP), the LGBTQ Health Equity Initiative, the Reproductive Justice Fund, and support for LGBTQ+ foster youth. The cuts would have rescinded funding that has already been awarded to over 68 community-based organizations working directly with underserved LGBTQ+ populations statewide.

"We are grateful to the California Legislature for restoring this critical funding and standing firm in support of LGBTQ+ Californians," said Tony Hoang, Executive Director of Equality California. "These programs are not optional—they are essential for transgender people, LGBTQ+ youth, and communities of color who face disproportionate barriers to care. At a time when our rights and our health are under attack nationwide, California must lead with action, not just words. We urge Governor Newsom to keep this commitment to LGBTQ+ Californians and sign a budget that protects the health, safety, and dignity of our community."

Throughout the budget process, the Health Equity Coalition worked closely with both the Senate and Assembly to advocate for full restoration of the threatened funding. Amid a projected \$12 billion state deficit, legislators recognized that maintaining support for LGBTQ+ health equity is not only fiscally responsible, it is a moral imperative. These funds are essential to meet the growing needs of LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender, nonbinary, and BIPOC individuals, who continue to face entrenched health disparities.

"Our communities rose up, and the California Legislature listened. We thank them for demonstrating true accountability to the people they represent by rejecting the Governor's proposed \$40 million in cuts," said Dannie Ceseña, MPH, Director of the California LGBTQ+

Health and Human Services Network. “This is more than a budget line; it’s a lifeline for LGBTQ+ programs, reproductive care, and mental health services for our most vulnerable youth. This decision sends a powerful message to their constituents: California stands by its commitment to supporting our most vulnerable populations, including our Two-Spirit, LGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and birthing communities. Now, it is Governor Newsom’s turn to prove he has heard that same message and sign the budget that will protect these essential health programs.”

The proposed cuts would have dismantled critical programs originally created and funded through explicit legislative intent. Services provided by grantee organizations include trauma-informed mental health support, peer-based counseling, and culturally competent care—particularly in regions historically overlooked by mainstream systems. Eliminating this funding midstream would not only devastate programs that serve LGBTQ+ communities across the state, but also lead to staff layoffs at a time when many community-based organizations are already facing severe budget cuts from the federal government.

During Wednesday’s Budget Committee hearings in both houses, Legislators voiced strong support for the joint budget plan and praised the difficult but necessary choices made to protect California’s most vulnerable communities. On Friday, both the Senate and Assembly voted as full bodies to send the Budget to the Governor for final negotiation and approval, meeting their June 15th statutory deadline to pass a balanced budget.

“We’re deeply grateful to the legislative budget committees for recognizing the urgent need to protect LGBTQ+ health amid a difficult fiscal year and ongoing attacks on our communities,” said Joey Espinoza-Hernández, Director of Policy and Community Building at the Los Angeles LGBT Center. “Their leadership helps ensure that life-saving programs—especially those serving transgender, nonbinary, intersex (TGNBI+), and BIPOC Californians—can continue without disruption. We now urge Governor Newsom to uphold this commitment in the final budget. Equity is a responsibility, and this funding provides critical care, safety, and dignity to our most vulnerable.”

“As a proud provider of sexual, reproductive, and gender-affirming health care, the Planned Parenthood affiliates in California are grateful to the Legislature for restoring critical state funding for these programs supporting LGBTQ+ and other vulnerable patients in our state,” said Jodi Hicks, CEO and President of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California. “As the Trump administration decimates federal programs that advance reproductive justice and health equity, California must continue to be a beacon for LGBTQ+ people and their ability to access the health care they need and deserve, no matter what.”

With the Legislature’s budget plan now finalized, the Coalition urges Governor Gavin Newsom to adopt the Legislature’s budget and ensure this critical funding is restored in the final approved 2025–26 State Budget. At stake are the operations of more than 68 local programs and the state’s longstanding commitment to health equity for LGBTQ+ Californians.

Equity must be more than a talking point, it must be backed by action and investment. This restored funding is not abstract policy. It translates directly into life-saving care and resources for communities. The Health Equity Coalition remains committed to working with the Governor's Office to ensure these restorations are reflected in the final enacted budget.

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