



January 28, 2019

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The Honorable Toni Atkins
President pro Tempore, State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker, State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Atkins and Assembly Member Rendon,

As you both know from your long experience in California governance, counties in this state have a unique role. We are half local and half state, answering to both the residents of the communities we live in and state policymakers and oversight agencies whose programs we provide.

State and county budgets in California are so intertwined with each other that continuing the close collaboration and partnership CSAC has had with state leaders for the past several years is the only way California can reach its full potential.

Governor Newsom has recognized this fact, as shown in his proposed 2019-20 budget. It recognizes our partnership and addresses many of our shared priorities, while striking a balance between fiscal restraint and investment in programs that will make California better.

Counties strongly support his proposals to restore balance to state and county funding levels for In-Home Supportive Services, build on recent historic investments for housing and homelessness programs, and provide resources for disaster response, recovery, and prevention.

In-Home Supportive Services. The IHSS program manages to both improve the lives of the people it serves and reduce care costs by giving seniors and disabled individuals the help they need to stay in their homes and out of expensive care facilities. By increasing the state's General Fund commitment to IHSS, this proposal will create a structure for counties to manage IHSS costs and effectively deliver critically needed behavioral health and public health programs on behalf of the state. Counties appreciate the Administration's willingness to work with us to restore balance and identify a more sustainable solution for IHSS funding.

Housing and Homelessness. The \$1.25 billion the Governor's budget proposes spending to jump start housing production and site emergency shelters and navigation centers is also welcome. In most counties, despite a near-record economic recovery, general revenues have still not returned to pre-recession levels, in real terms. With so many counties running just to stand still, it's difficult to make meaningful progress toward important goals like permanently reducing homelessness and improving planning, zoning, and permitting processes. The best use of one-time revenue is to improve lives and at the same time make changes that will reduce long-term costs. These proposals

do just that. We look forward to participating in any conversation about what local governments can do to encourage sufficient housing for people of all income levels.

Disaster Recovery and Local Assistance. Perhaps no issue better highlights the need for the state and counties to partner than the disasters that have caused so much destruction and suffering. We appreciate the proposal to backfill tax losses for fire-ravaged counties and the waiver of the local share for debris removal costs. Other proposals for firefighting equipment, public safety radios, mutual aid, and 9-1-1 fees should also help limit the effects of future disasters. We also appreciate the investment in forest health and resiliency. Better forest management will help protect our communities and watersheds and create safer, more resilient communities.

In closing, we wish to extend our thanks for the leadership you have both shown on issues important to counties, as well as the willingness to work with CSAC that you have shown. Like the state, counties are here to serve all Californians with critically needed services and practical idealism.

Respectfully,



Graham Knaus
Executive Director

Cc:

The Honorable Holly Mitchell

The Honorable Phil Ting

Members, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review

Members, Assembly Committee on Budget

Consultants, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review

Consultants, Assembly Committee on Budget