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February 28, 2022

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #3
1021 O Street, Suite 8530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Resource Family Approval Funding

Dear Senator Talamantes Eggman:

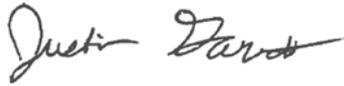
On behalf of the California State Association of Counties, I am writing to share our support and co-sponsorship of a budget proposal for Resource Family Approval (RFA) process funding. CSAC is joining the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in respectfully requesting an estimated \$100 million General Fund for county workload for the RFA process.

All counties utilize the RFA process, which is a state mandated activity passed as part of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) that helps relatives and non-related individuals become approved foster caregivers. The RFA process combines relative approval, foster care licensing, and adoption home studies into a single, unified process that is streamlined, child-focused, and family-friendly. This process aligns with the goals of CCR to have foster children be cared for in a home-based setting with loving family caregivers.

Counties have been fronting the costs for the RFA process for years due to a differing interpretation of the constitutional requirements of Proposition 30. Under Proposition 30, the state is required to fund the net costs to each county of any new state child welfare requirements enacted after 2011. Counties disagree with the state's interpretation that the RFA process was a requirement prior to 2011. There was no statewide mandate at the time and there have been additional requirements added since that time that further increased workload and costs associated with RFA. There is an agreed upon methodology to determine the CCR true-up that operationalizes the Proposition 30 requirement. The current estimate for the unfunded net new costs of the RFA process is \$100 million for 2019-20, the year of CCR costs that is currently being reconciled. This state funding is needed to ensure that counties can continue this vital CCR work and meet other child welfare mandates.

For all of the above reasons, CSAC is co-sponsoring the budget proposal for RFA process funding and respectfully asks for your support. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 698-5751 or jgarrett@counties.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Garrett
Senior Legislative Representative

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #3
The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Renita Polk, Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Rebecca Hamilton, Senate Republican Fiscal Office
Mareva Brown, Office of the Senate President pro Tempore
Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office
Kim Johnson, Director, Department of Social Services
Adam Dorsey, Department of Finance
Tam Ma, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom