

## Legislative Priorities for Children's Health

### ✓ PROTECTING MEDI-CAL COVERAGE FOR CALIFORNIANS (AB 2956, Boerner)

Each month thousands of children are wrongly dropped from Medi-Cal coverage, because of procedural or 'paperwork' barriers. **This bill maintains federal tools that help keep kids and families covered.** Plus, adult Medi-Cal enrollees will get coverage for a full year, even if their income changes.

Over HALF of children in California rely on Medi-Cal, of whom 75% are children of color.

More than 8 out of 10 disenrollments are unwarranted.

### ✓ COUNTY MEDI-CAL CALL CENTER STANDARDS & REPORTING (SB 1289, Roth)

This bill will set new standards for county call center wait times and require the results to be publicly posted. Medi-Cal enrollees can re-enroll by phone – a key tool that helps Medi-Cal better serve families. But long call wait times – often 2 hours or more – make phone-renewal impossible for many. The impact is worse on those with limited English.

"I called today and spent three hours on the waiting line. They never picked up."

- Spanish-speaking Latina parent/guardian, Fresno

### ✓ TIMELY ACCESS TO MEDI-CAL MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH (AB 2466, Carrillo)

Low-income youth experience the greatest inequities in mental health outcomes, and greatest barriers to accessing services. **This bill will make sure Medi-Cal-managed care plans take steps to ensure timely access to mental health care.** It will also hold plans accountable for efforts to recruit new providers and enhance the Department of Health Care Services' compliance monitoring and accountability procedures.

While California has a 48-hour standard for urgent mental health appointments, the median wait time is a shocking 13 days.

### ✓ END DIGITAL DISCRIMINATION IN CALIFORNIA! (AB 2239, Bonta)

This bill will make California the first state to define digital discrimination. Digital discrimination means practices that create unequal results, regardless of intent. The bill will embed the definition into policy reforms. Equal access to the internet is key for families to get the education, health care, housing and public benefits that children need to grow up healthy and thrive.

Large internet service providers routinely offer faster, more affordable service in high-income, mainly white communities.



## Additional Legislative Priorities for Children's Health

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOND OF 2024 (AB1657, Wicks)

This bill authorizes **\$10 billion in housing bond funds for affordable housing**. The housing will target lower income families, supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness, farmworker housing, tribal housing, homeownership opportunities, and preservation of existing affordable housing.

### HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (ACA 10, Haney)

This bill will add **adequate housing as a fundamental human right to the California Constitution**. Lack of housing deeply harms health and well-being. Families with children – especially families of color – are more likely to be housing insecure and face eviction.



## State Budget Priorities for Children's Health

### CONTINUOUS MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



California has adopted a multi-year continuous Medi-Cal enrollment protection for young children. This will enable children under the age of five to keep coverage without annual renewal requirements that can cause harmful health care gaps. **To meet the January 2025 start date for this policy, we urge the Legislature to fully fund implementation in the 2024-25 budget.**

### INCREASE RATES FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS, PROMOTORAS & REPRESENTATIVES

Community health workers, promotoras & representatives (CHW/P/Rs) provide crucial prevention & early intervention services and connection points for marginalized communities, yet CHW/P/Rs do not receive the thriving wages they deserve. **We urge the Legislature to include a base rate increase to at least 87.5% of the Medicare rate, effective July 1, 2024.** This will be on par with other proposed provider rate increases, using existing allocated funding.

### SAFEGUARD PROPOSED \$1.5 BILLION FOR MIDDLE MILE BROADBAND INITIATIVE

This funding, proposed in the Governor's January budget, is essential to complete the state's middle mile network – the backbone of the internet. One in 5 Californians do not have a reliable internet connection. Too many are families with low wealth and families of color. Without a robust middle mile network, internet connection for homes, businesses, schools, libraries and clinics become impossible or impossibly costly.