



Human Lives. Human Connection.

February 12, 2024

Hon. Scott Wiener, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Comte
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hon. Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hon. Caroline Menjivar, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Sub. 3
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hon. Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee 2
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Governor's Proposal to Delay Implementation of Developmental Services Provider Rate Reform – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Weiner, Senator Menjivar, Assemblymember Gabriel, and Assemblymember Jackson:

The California Speech Language Hearing Association (CSHA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Governor's Budget for 2024-25 for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). The impacts of the pandemic on our most vulnerable populations, especially young children, require continued attention to ensure families have access and support. Many speech language pathologists provide services through the Department of Developmental Services and the Early Intervention program funded by the state. We are writing today to urge the Legislature to reject the Governor's proposal to delay the agreed upon rate increase for DDS providers.

CSHA joins community providers, stakeholders, Association of Regional Centers (ARCA) and its partners in the Lanterman Coalition, in expressing opposition with the Governor's Proposal to delay the final phase of scheduled provider rate increases until July 1, 2025. This one-year rate delay results in \$1 billion less going to the critical supports and services for Californians with developmental disabilities. CSHA believes that this \$1 Billion is necessary in budget year 2024-25 to allow families to receive the services that they need.

CSHA recognizes the investments in the state's developmental services system in recent years. These investments have provided critical support to Californians with developmental disabilities, begun to address inequitable pay for providers and increased service capacity for families in need. These past investments have moved us forward and there is still work to be done to provide adequate services. We are deeply

concerned that the delay in the planned increase will result in the decline in service access and utilization because many providers simply cannot continue to participate.

The \$1 billion delay is one of the largest delays proposed for 2024-25. We understand that with the delay, the savings to the state is only \$612.5 million and this reduction would impact services to the state's most vulnerable population. Moreover, by withholding this \$612.5 million to continue with the scheduled rate reform, **California is leaving \$408 million of federal funds on the table.**

As you begin hearings and deliberations on the Governor's Budget and craft the 2024-25 budget, we respectfully request that you reject the delay in implementing the DDS provider rate reform.

If you would like additional information please contact our legislative advocates Andrea Ball and Laura Wasco at andrea@ballfrostgroup.com and laura@ballfrostgroup.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Marcella McCollum, EdD, CCC-SLP
Board Chair
California Speech Language Hearing
Association



Robert McKinney, M.A., CCC-SLP
Board Chair-Elect & Advocacy Chair
California Speech Language Hearing
Association