

August 26, 2010

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## Democrats' Budget Proposal: A More Balanced Approach

The California legislature continues to struggle to resolve the State's \$19 billion budget deficit even as we enter the third month of fiscal year 2010-11. On August 3rd, Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg and Assembly Speaker John Perez announced a new budget proposal that includes implementing key revenue strategies and rejecting most of the Governor's May revision proposals, including those for Health & Human Services.

Among the Democrats' proposed revenue strategies are—

- Delaying the New Business Tax Breaks scheduled to take effect in 2010-11 to avoid \$2 billion in cuts to education and other critical services
- Closing the Oil Severance Loophole to generate \$600 million this year and \$1.2 billion ongoing
- Implementing a Tax Swap that reduces sales tax but increases personal income taxes and vehicle license fees that results in combined federal-state tax reduction for personal income taxpayers across all income groups while still raising \$1.8 billion.

The Democratic proposal includes—

- Fully funding the Healthy Families Program
- Rejecting Medi-Cal cuts (including cuts to programs for legal immigrants)
- Rejecting Public Health cuts (such as cancer screening and treatment programs, HIV/AIDS and maternal, child, and adolescent health programs)
- Maintaining CalWORKs
- Restoring funding for In-Home Support Services (IHSS).

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, the Budget Conference Committee approved the plan. However, Republicans and the Governor are not in support and question the plan's fiscal stability. To read more about the plan, go to

<http://asmdc.org/issues/budget/pdf/JobBudget/UpdatedCaliforniaJobsBudget.pdf>.

According to the California Budget Project (CBP), the proposal does provide a more balanced approach. However, the tax swap proposal would shift a greater share of the cost of public services to individuals, specifically those in middle-income households. See the following CBP document for more details [www.cbp.org/pdfs/2010/100618\\_Budget\\_Comparison.pdf](http://www.cbp.org/pdfs/2010/100618_Budget_Comparison.pdf).

## Community Meeting on Oil Severance Tax

As part of the Rebuild California campaign to pass a State budget that invests in communities, Mujeres de la Tierra, California Partnership, SEIU California, and Community Health Councils hosted a community hearing on *How an Oil Severance Tax Can Help Close the State Budget Crisis*. Overlooking the Baldwin Hills oil fields located in one of the most densely-populated areas of Los Angeles, area residents gathered to hear testimonials on the impact of budget cuts to vital health and human services. Participants learned how the proposed \$1.2 billion oil severance tax could help fund public services and protect the environment.

California is currently the only one of 22 major oil-producing states in the US that allows companies to extract oil tax free. The top four oil producers in the State of California made more than \$45 billion in profits in 2009, a bad year, and \$106 billion in 2008. Because oil companies sell oil extracted in California throughout the world, this tax would not have a significant effect on prices at California gas pumps.

With oil production taking place in our own backyards, asking oil companies to pay their fair share is sound policy. For more information on the oil severance tax, visit Rebuild California at <http://www.letsrebuildca.org/>.

## California Healthy Food Financing Initiative

AB 2720 to establish a California Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) continues to make its way through the State Senate while the August 31<sup>st</sup> deadline to pass any bill prior to adjournment quickly approaches. Sponsored by Speaker John Perez and Speaker Emeritus Karen Bass, the bill would require the Department of Food and Agriculture to develop recommendations to promote access to healthy foods in underserved areas. The Initiative would only be implemented if a Federal HFFI is established and funds are available.

AB 2720 still needs to pass the full Senate and amendments approved by the Assembly before it can be sent to the Governor. A Federal HFFI is contingent upon Congress appropriating the \$345 million President Obama requested in his fiscal year 2011

budget proposal for the US Departments of Agriculture, Treasury and Health and Human Services.

## South LA's Expiring Fast-Food Moratorium

Community Health Councils and its Food Policy Roundtable hosted *Zoning In on Healthy Fast Food*, a Town Hall meeting on the need for permanent regulations on the development of unhealthy fast-food restaurants in South Los Angeles. More than 60 participants — including residents, public officials and representatives of neighborhood councils, community- and faith-based organizations — joined the event.

Attendees voiced significant support for limiting new fast-food restaurants near schools, parks, youth centers, and other places children congregate. Participants expressed their support for regulating the density of fast-food restaurants by limiting new fast-food restaurants based on their proximity to existing fast-food venues and/or by placing a cap on the total number of fast-food restaurants in South LA. The participants recommended that efforts be made to attract sit-down restaurants that offer healthier options and educate the community on healthy eating.

For more information on the fast-food moratorium, contact Tanishia Wright, Community Liaison, at [Tanishia@chc-inc.org](mailto:Tanishia@chc-inc.org).

## Newly Appointed MLK Board of Directors

The LA County Board of Supervisors approved seven candidates on Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> to serve as the Board of Directors for the new MLK Hospital scheduled to open in 2013. The seven candidates were jointly recommended by the University of California and Los Angeles County. They individually boast ten or more years of experience in healthcare, business, and/or law. The new Board will have significant responsibility over the operation of the hospital. Their appointment marks a crucial and timely step towards the hospital's re-opening.

The new MLK Board members include:

- Manuel A. Abascal, partner at Latham and Watkins
- Dr. Elaine Batchlor, chief medical officer of L.A. Care Health Plan
- Linda Griego, president and CEO of Griego Enterprises, Inc.
- Paul King, president and CEO of Children's Hospital of Los Angeles Medical Group
- Michael Madden, retired former CEO of Providence Healthcare of Southern California
- Dr. Robert Margolis, managing partner and CEO of HealthCare Partners
- James Yoshioka, retired former president and CEO of Citrus Valley Health Partners.

For more detailed bios of the Board members, go to <http://file.lacounty.gov/bos/supdocs/56156.pdf>. For additional information, please contact Laura Ewing at [laura@chc-inc.org](mailto:laura@chc-inc.org).

## Employment Opportunity

### CHC Policy Analyst

Be part of an organization where you'll be on the frontline of healthcare reform in California. If you are committed to changing health and healthcare in our community, there is an opportunity to join Community Health Councils as a Policy Analyst.

The Policy Analyst provides support in linking policy and systems change with enduring community-level investments that promote disease prevention. Responsibilities include monitoring and providing updates and analysis of key policy issues at national, state, county and city levels. The PA helps develop the project's annual policy agenda as defined by CHC and community stakeholders; writes policy briefs; develops and implements action plans to advocate a policy agenda; coordinates and performs relevant stakeholder training; develops and disseminates policy updates; and participates in the publication of CHC's monthly newsletter *Health Matters*.

The position requires the ability to multi-task; to follow-up on policy activities; prepare and maintain documentation of policy and advocacy actions; act as liaison or representative between CHC and a variety of local and statewide policy committees and workgroups. The successful candidate must be able to communicate with all sectors and levels of diverse communities.

**Qualifications:** a Master's degree in public policy, public health, sociology, urban planning or a related field; a minimum of two years policy and/or research experience; knowledge of the legislative process, chronic disease disparities, and key healthcare policy issues. Strong verbal and written skills, coalition experience, good presentation skills required; knowledge of South Los Angeles communities and organizations a plus.

*CHC is a non-profit, community-based health advocacy, policy and educational organization. We offer a competitive salary and generous benefits including medical, dental, vision and 403b plans; vacation, sick and holiday benefits. CHC is an equal opportunity employer.*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION ... CONTACT  
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