

News Release



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The Terminator Comes to Life: Children, Families and California's Economy Are the Collateral Damage *Governor Uses Economic Crisis to Widen Economic Divide and Stifle Local Economies*

Los Angeles, CA—Community Health Councils released the following statement in response to the budget Governor Schwarzenegger signed today:

“The character played by the Governor on the silver screen has come to life raging destruction on schools, hospitals, colleges, and parks in our local communities. Like the ‘Terminator,’ the Governor has bullied his way through the legislative process to get what he wants and shown no regard to health, human life and safety. The cuts the Governor has proposed in the budget include slashing state funding for Medi-Cal by \$323.3 million without specifying how these savings would be achieved; cutting CalWORKS funding, a program that provides temporary financial assistance to needy families; reducing services for elderly and disabled people receiving In Home Supportive Services; and eliminating school-age community child care programs. The Governor has systematically dismantled more than 40 years of progress in California, the 5th largest economy in the world, which has labored to ensure that its citizens are afforded basic necessities like food, shelter and medical care.

But the Governor couldn't pull this off by himself. The Assembly and Senate buckled under the intimidation brought on by Schwarzenegger. Both the Governor and conservatives made it clear during the budget negotiations that they would not even consider raising taxes on tobacco or oil extraction or closing tax loopholes. California will eventually be paying the price of the Governor's short sightedness, but it especially affects our state's children, who cannot fend for themselves. As money is pulled out of the healthcare industry, cities, schools, local economies and workers in California are pushed to the unemployment line.

Healthy Families, California's Children's Health Insurance Program, had already taken a huge hit when enrollment was frozen on July 17th. In just one week, 7,000 children were placed on a waiting list for the program. MRMIB has said that the freeze could prevent 350,000 children from gaining access to health coverage. But today, with the stroke of his pen, the Governor added another \$50 million cut to the \$124 million cut already approved, effectively doubling the number of uninsured children in California.

Healthy Families was already experiencing record-breaking enrollment. And, for every dollar cut in Healthy Families, the State is denied two dollars in federal matching funds. Losing a \$2 for \$1 match from the federal government for every dollar California spends is another example of irresponsible policy.

At every stage when there was a choice between protecting California's families or siding with special interests, our Governor and Legislators sided with special interests. California's children deserved more.”

Community Health Councils is a non-profit, community-based health promotion, advocacy and policy organization. Established in 1992, CHC's mission is to improve health and increase access to quality healthcare for uninsured, economically-disadvantaged, and underserved populations.

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