



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Urges Governor to Restore \$124 Million to Child Welfare Services

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County is urging restoration of the \$124 million the Governor vetoed from child welfare services. The veto cripples efforts to prevent and respond to abuse, and thwarts efforts to improve the lives of the 331 foster children served in Yolo County. These cuts at the state level result in a \$1.1 million deficit for Yolo County’s Child Welfare Services.

“Serving foster youth is not an option,” said Yolo County Board of Supervisor Chair Mike McGowan. “When these children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care, the state takes responsibility as their surrogate parent. These are the state’s most vulnerable children.”

The \$1.1 million cut significantly erodes the reach and impact of programs that protect and support the children in foster care in Yolo County. To meet this deficit, eight social worker, one managerial, one office support and two supervisorial positions will be eliminated. In addition, contracts with local service providers have been reduced 10% and further cuts may be forthcoming. As a result, caseload ratios are expected to rise well beyond the benchmarks established by the state earlier this decade. Other deleterious results include:

- Reduced funds for emancipation programs – fewer foster children will receive housing, emancipation and transition services at age 18. Without these services, research demonstrates too many of these foster youth go on to commit crimes and become incarcerated, resulting in further and dire overcrowding of state prisons.
- Reduced funds for emergency response services and the number of social workers able to investigate reports of abuse and neglect – this means fewer and/or less thorough investigations into child abuse and neglect that occur every year, leaving children in potentially life-threatening situations. In Yolo County there were 1,812 investigations of reported abuse and neglect in 2008.
- Reduced funds for family maintenance services – Based on current caseloads, this could leave as many as 121 families in Yolo County without essential services such as parenting skills and drug treatment that keep children safe with their families and prevent removal into the foster care system – resulting in far greater costs to the state.
- Reduced funds for family reunification services – resulting in the inability to reunify 166 children in Yolo County with their families, increasing the number of children who are in long-term foster care, separated from their siblings and shuttled among multiple placements and schools.

- Reduced funds for permanent placement services to foster children – leaving as many as 162 children in Yolo County languishing in long-term foster care instead of finding permanent loving homes through adoption or legal guardianship.

“Ensuring the success of children in the child welfare and foster care system ensures the successful future of this state, and saves social and budget costs in the future,” said Yolo County Department of Social Services Director Pam Miller. “We strongly urge the Governor to reverse this line item veto and restore child welfare funding for the benefit of all Yolo County residents.”

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