

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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Fifth District

June 24, 2021

Ronda Paschal
Deputy Legislative Secretary
Office of the Honorable Governor
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: IHSS Fiscal Penalty Proposal – Oppose

Dear Deputy Paschal:

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to the proposal in the legislative budget package to impose a ten percent penalty on counties that have failed to reach an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) collective bargaining agreement.

The County of Santa Barbara is strongly opposed to a tenfold increase to the IHSS fiscal penalty that was just enacted in 2019 as counties have made substantial progress on reaching new agreements. 46 counties, covering 95 percent of the IHSS workforce, have increased wages for IHSS providers since 2017, three other counties are currently negotiating, and six are waiting for outreach from the unions.

In our County, the most recent collective bargaining agreement with UDW resulted in an MOU that increased Provider wages from \$12.10 to \$14.77 hourly between February 2020 and January 2021, approximately a 22% increase in less than a year, in addition to providing a contribution of twenty (20) cents per paid hour to the Union Health Trust Fund (UDW Trust) to fund a Dental and Vision plan for all eligible Providers.

A ten percent penalty would cost about as much as a \$1.00 wage increase. It is inappropriate to have a penalty amount that would cost counties significantly more than wage increases that have been agreed to or amounts recommended by a neutral factfinder.

This high penalty amount could be leveraged against all counties in future negotiations, not just those that have failed to reach an agreement. It essentially represents the state mandating counties to fund a certain level of wage increase and would put funding pressures on other Realignment programs.

The Board of Supervisors adopted a 2021 Legislative Platform which includes the Inter-Agency Collaboration principle that specifically states that the County will support the advocacy efforts of such organizations as the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and other local, regional and federal agencies/associations, as well as the Fiscal Stability principle that states that the County will oppose the loss of, or redirecting of, existing revenue.

If you have questions about the Board's position, please contact the County's Legislative Coordinator, Jasmine McGinty at 805-568-3108 or jmcginty@countyofsb.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cliff Berg
Governmental Advocates, Inc.

Cc: Keely Bosler, Director, California Department of Finance
Members, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors
Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Nancy Anderson, Assistant County Executive Officer, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors