

## GOVERNOR'S JANUARY 2007-08 STATE BUDGET PROPOSAL

Every year, the Governor proposes a state budget plan by January 10. As with all budgets, the Governor's proposed allocation of resources is one of the clearest ways to demonstrate our state's most important values and programs.

In 2007, the Governor's state budget proposal spends \$103.141 billion and assumes \$101.278 billion in revenues and transfers. Taking into account \$2.046 billion in transfers, the Governor's proposal has no operating deficit, primarily achieved through a combination of program cuts, shifts to special funds, and assumptions about revenue.

The following are budget proposals of specific interest to the Asian Pacific American community, with a focus on low-income, immigrant, and underserved members. The proposed budget:

- Maintains funding for the CA Department of Education's Clearinghouse of Multilingual Documents, a resource for schools to share translated written notices that can be disseminated to limited English proficient (LEP) parents. Translated information will lead to meaningful involvement of LEP parents in their children's education, resulting in greater academic success.
- Eliminates funding that had been allocated on a one-time basis for translations of statewide parental documents.
- Proposes changes to the CalWORKs program that will cut off 55,000 low-income families from cash assistance. Several of the proposals target eliminating cash assistance targeted to children, if their parents fail to meet certain requirements. For example, one particular change would eliminate cash assistance after five years for children whose parents are ineligible for CalWORKs due to their immigration status.
- Provides \$5 million to establish a new pilot project in civil courts that would provide legal representation for clients without access to an attorney.
- Does not include any funding for providing interpreters in civil courts. Despite ongoing advocacy efforts since last year, the civil courts continue to perpetuate barriers for LEP individuals to access justice. There is funding for interpreters in criminal courts.
- Maintains \$3 million in funding for the Naturalization Services Program, which provides grants to community-based organizations for assisting immigrants with attaining citizenship.
- Provides \$873,000 for improved processing of housing discrimination complaints filed with the Department of Fair Employment & Housing.

In addition to the proposals highlighted above, there are numerous other proposals that may be of interest to the Asian Pacific American community. The following are highlights of major initiatives in a variety of areas<sup>1</sup>:

- Education
  - Fully funds the Proposition 98 guarantee and per student spending is proposed to be \$8,569.
  - Allocates \$52 million to expand career technical education offered at middle schools, high schools, and community colleges.
  - Provides \$5 million for materials to assist students with the CA high school exit exam.

- Funds \$268 million for assisting low-performing schools with staff professional development, class size reduction, and increased numbers of counselors.
- Maintains current levels of student fees at community colleges, but increases student fees for University of California and California State University students.
- Eliminates funding for Student Academic Preparation and Education Programs
- Health
  - As outlined in a previous AACRE update, the Governor released a far-reaching health care reform plan in early January. The health care plan is not part of the Governor’s proposed budget because the Governor assumes that the health care reform will be financed by a combination of sources, including federal matching funds and fees collected from physicians, hospitals, and employers.
  - Streamlines enrollment to increase participation in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families
  - Implements the California Discount Prescription Drug Plan, an agreement reached last year to provide discounted prescription drugs to families under 300% of the federal poverty level.
- Human Services
  - Includes additional CalWORKs cuts such as the suspension of cost-of-living adjustments for the third year, and a \$16 million reduction in CalWORKs county employment services and child care.
- Courts
  - Adds 100 new judgeships over the next two years.
- Housing
  - Allocates bond funds to housing projects from Proposition 1C.
- Corrections
  - Provides \$457,000 for a California Sentencing Commission to make recommendations on sentencing guidelines.
  - Implements Proposition 83 to increase monitoring and punishment of sex offenders.
  - Proposes to house female juvenile offenders and non-violent juvenile offenders in local facilities rather than in state facilities.
  - Increases funding for anti-recidivism programs, including drug treatment and mental health services.
  - Provides \$50 million to create the California Adult Probation Accountability and Rehabilitation Act program that will increase the effectiveness of probation services for offenders in the 18-25 year old range.

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<sup>i</sup> Information was provided by the California Budget Project’s publication entitled “Governor Releases Proposed 2007-08 Budget”.