

## The Board of Supervisors

County Administration Building  
651 Pine Street, Room 106  
Martinez, California 94553

**John Gioia**, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
**Candace Andersen**, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
**Diane Burgis**, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
**Karen Mitchoff**, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
**Federal D. Glover**, 5<sup>th</sup> District

## Contra Costa County



**David Twa**  
Clerk of the Board  
and  
County Administrator  
(925) 335-1900

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Dr. Joaquin Arambula  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health and Human Services  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: OPPOSE Proposed Reduction in Funding for CalWORKs**

Dear Chair Arambula and Committee Members:

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors opposes the cuts to the CalWORKs Single Allocation proposed in the Governor's 2018/2019 state budget and supports an increase in CalWORKs grant levels for program participants.

The CalWORKs program is a critical component of California's safety net for families with low incomes, providing families with modest monthly cash grants while helping parents overcome barriers to employment and find work. A number of cuts were made to CalWORKs during and after the Great Recession, including reducing grant levels and eliminating the annual state cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). Recent years' budgets have incrementally increased CalWORKs grant levels, but this has not been adequate to restore cuts made in prior years.

The Governor's proposed budget for 2018-19 does not increase CalWORKs grants or reinstate the COLA. According to the California Budget & Policy Center, if grant levels remain frozen, the proposed maximum monthly grant for a family of three in a high cost county (such as ours) would be \$9 lower than in 2007-08, without adjusting for inflation. If grant levels had been adjusted for inflation each year beginning 2007-2008, the maximum grant in 2018-19 would be \$963, which is \$269 higher than the proposed value of \$714. Absent a significant grant increase in the 2018-19 fiscal year, this grant will equal just 41.2% of the federal poverty line, leaving it below the deep-poverty line for the eleventh calendar year.

With respect to the Single Allocation, the cuts will affect direct services and staffing related to eligibility activities, employment and supportive services, and child care for CalWORKs families. Contra Costa County expects to experience a \$1.5 million decrease in funding, from \$47.7 million to \$46.2 million in FY 2018/2019.

We understand the cuts are based on a projected 6% decrease in caseloads. However, due to the lack of COLA and inflation adjustments since the Great Recession, we are already in a diminished funding position. In addition, there will be further pressure on resources as we roll out new CalWORKs mandates and initiatives such as CalWORKs 2.0 and CalOAR.

In Contra Costa County, we work with close to 8,000 families who access CalWORKs services. A reduction in the allocation our county receives will have a direct negative impact on our ability to support these families, with children being the most heavily impacted of all.

Contra Costa County strongly urges you to maintain level Single Allocation funding for 2018/2019 so that we may continue to serve our neediest families at the intensity level they require for successful outcomes. We also support an increase in the CalWORKs grant levels for participating families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen Mitchoff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mitchoff".

KAREN MITCHOFF  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health and Human Services  
Contra Costa County Legislative Delegation  
Governor Edmund G. Brown  
Members, Board of Supervisors  
David Twa, County Administrator