

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News

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2008-2009 State Budget Report

State Budget for 2008-2009 appropriates about \$5.2 billion of the \$6.6 billion available for CalWORKs. What happens to the \$1.4 billion? It is used to balance the budget on the backs of impoverished families with needy children living on fixed incomes that are the same dollar amounts they received in 1989.

Yes, for poor children and families time has been still. Everyone else has received a raise; the welfare bureaucracy; various welfare industry contractors like computer vendors and private contractors such as Maximus, EDS, etc. The 2008-2009 state budget could not find \$140 million to give poor kids a COLA.

The CalWORKs budget can be found in two pieces of legislation. (1) The actual budget is contained in AB 88, Chapter 269 of statutes of 2008. (2) The trailer bill, which contains the statutory changes to implement the budget is AB 1279, Chapter 759 of statutes of 2008.

The governor vetoed \$70 million from the County CalWORKs single allocation. He stated in his veto message that even with the \$70 million reduction in county administration money for county welfare directors the budget still provides for an increase in their single allocation. **NOTE: It should be noted that welfare recipients were denied a COLA for the third year in a row.**

The trailer bill, AB 1279 makes numerous changes in the welfare system. The following are the highlights of these changes:

• **Section 1. Education Code Section 8206.1** provides that Department of Education shall develop a spending plan setting forth child care priorities in consultation with DSS, Dept. of Finance and other stakeholders. The plan shall be subject to a public hearing and a 30-day written comment period. This plan will be due before May of 2009 to the Legislature.

• **Section 5. Education Code §8357** is amended to provide: "Beginning March 1, 2009, the regional market rate ceilings shall be established at the 85th percentile of the 2007 regional market rate survey for that region. For the 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years, the 85th percentile ceilings of the 2007 regional market rate survey for that region shall remain in effect."

• **Section 6. Education Code §8447(g)** pro-

vides" Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no family receiving CalWORKs cash aid may be charged a family fee."

• **Section 16. Family Code § 17560** provides that the department shall establish and operate a state-wide compromise of arrears program for persons who are currently making child support payment for a time period to be determined by the department.

• **Section 27. Welf.&Inst. §10823** provides that the Office of Systems Integration shall test and begin user acceptance testing before 6/30/09 of ISAWS counties migrating to C-IV system. By 2-28-10 at least five unknown counties shall complete their migration from ISAWS to C-IV. All 35 counties shall be operating as C-IV by 8-31-10. ISAWS shall be put to rest 1-31-11.

• **Section 28. Welf.&Inst. §11320.32** provides extension for the implementation of the Temporary Assistance Program which would use state MOE dollars to aid to certain CalWORKs families meeting state WtW exemptions, but not federal exemptions rules from April 2009 to April 2010.

• **Section 30. Welf.&Inst. §11453(c)(5)** provides for no CalWORKs COLA for 2008-2009 impoverished families with needy children living on 1989 benefit levels.

• **Section 31. Welf.&Inst. §12201** would do away with the SSI and CAPI COLA for 2008-2009.

• **Section 32. Welf. & Inst. §12305.82** allows counties to investigate alleged IHSS fraud of \$500 or less. Yes. Counties can now spend thousands of taxpayer dollars to find alleged fraud of less than \$500. This is the welfare fraud bureaucracy defrauding taxpayers.

• **Section 36. Welf.&Inst. §15525** is added to create the WINS program. This program would give families who are no longer eligible for CalWORKs because they are working, \$40 in food stamps so they can be counted as another family meeting the federal work participation rates (FWPR). This section also requires that DSS convene a workgroup before December 1, 2008 to work on the implementation of this WINS program and consider other changes that would enhance the state's ability to meet the FWPRs.

You can download these bills at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>