

Budget and Legislative Update

AUGUST 2004



PRSRRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
STATE OF CALIF.
ASSEMBLY



California Legislature ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

CHAIR:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER JUDY CHU

MEMBERS:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER WILMA CHAN
ASSEMBLYMEMBER CAROL LIU
ASSEMBLYMEMBER GEORGE NAKANO
ASSEMBLYMEMBER LELAND YEE

Budget and Legislative Update

SEPTEMBER 2004

Message From The Chair

Dear Friends:

The California Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus represents and advocates for the interests of the diverse API communities throughout California. It is an honor to be a member of the Caucus and to serve as the API community's voice in Sacramento.

2004 has been an active and successful year. This legislative session, the Caucus identified seven bills as legislative priorities and also fought to protect key programs serving the API community from being cut in the budget process.

The Caucus has already started to form its priorities for next year. The API Legislative Caucus' first annual policy summit "Speaking in One Voice" was held on June 7 in Sacramento. Over four hundred community leaders from across the State gathered in the Capitol to discuss and prioritize the community's key policy issues. The Caucus will use the outcomes from this year's Summit to help develop its policy agenda and goals for next year.

Please feel free to contact the API Caucus with any input or need for assistance.

STATE CAPITOL: P.O. BOX 942849 • SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0049 • (916) 319-3686 • FAX: (916) 319-3628

2004-2005 Budget Priorities

The State faced a \$16.2 billion shortfall for the 2004-2005 fiscal year, many critical programs serving the Asian Pacific Islander community were proposed for reduction or elimination. The Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus adopted budget priorities to protect these key programs. This year's final budget funded all of the Caucus' budget priorities. The priorities for 2004-2005 were:

Oppose Block-Granting of Immigrant Programs

The Administration proposed to combine funding for four state-only immigrant programs into a block grant to counties. These programs were: Healthy Families for documented immigrants, California Food Assistance Program (CFAP), Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), and CalWORKS for legal immigrants. The amount of the block grant would have been reduced by five percent. The impact of this lower level of funding would have been the equivalent of 273 less hungry individuals receiving CFAP, 984 disabled and elderly individuals receiving CAPI, and over 2,000 less children receiving Healthy Families health coverage. Under the proposal, counties would have been forced to choose which of these vulnerable populations to cut. The block granting proposal was estimated to save \$6.6 million General Fund savings in the budget year.

OUTCOME: Immigrant programs were fully funded and not block-granted.

Oppose Capping Enrollment in Immigrant Medi-Cal Programs

The Administration proposed to cap enrollment in four health programs that serve immigrants at the April 2004 level. The programs were: Medi-Cal for legal immigrants in the country less than 5 years, Medi-Cal Prenatal Care and Long-Term Care to undocumented individuals, and Medi-Cal Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. Immigrants needing services would have been placed on a wait list until a vacancy occurred for services. Under the proposed caps, 11,439 legal immigrants, 65,900 undocumented immigrants, and 525 immigrants receiving Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment would have been placed on a waiting list for Medi-Cal. The caps would have resulted in \$18.2 million General Fund savings in the budget year.

OUTCOME: Immigrant Medi-Cal programs were fully funded and not capped.

Oppose Elimination of the California Veterans Cash Benefit Program (for Filipino Veterans)

The Administration proposed to eliminate the California Veterans Cash Benefit Program for current year savings of \$1.4 million General Fund and budget year savings of \$5.5 million General Funds. This program provides a cash grant at the same level as the state SSP grant (about \$414 per month) to approximately 1,700 veterans of World War II that returned to the Republic of the Philippines.

OUTCOME: The California Veterans Cash Benefit Program was preserved at \$5.5 million.

Oppose Elimination of Outreach and Academic Preparation Programs at University of California (UC) & California State Universities (CSU)

The Administration proposed to eliminate UC/CSU outreach programs by reducing \$85.3 million in General Fund support in the budget year. These programs are designed to academically prepare disadvantaged students across the state to access public colleges and universities and currently serve over 800,000 primarily low-income and minority students. The programs were reduced over 50% in the FY 2003-2004 budget.

OUTCOME: Outreach and Academic Preparation programs were preserved.

Naturalization Services Program (NSP)

The Naturalization Services Program was eliminated in the 2003-04 State Budget. It provided services to assist legal permanent residents to obtain citizenship through a network of community non-profits throughout the State. For about \$350 per client, NSP provides training and support to individuals obtaining their citizenship.

OUTCOME: The Naturalization Services Program was restored at \$1.5 million.

2004 Legislative Priorities

AJR 64 - Condemns bigotry and violence against Arab, South Asian, Muslim, and Sikh Americans.

OUTCOME: Adopted by the Legislature

AB 292 - Prohibits government agencies and private entities that receive state funding from using children under age 15 as interpreters with specified exceptions for emergencies and simple queries at public benefits agencies.

STATUS: Adopted by Assembly and held in Senate Appropriations Committee

AB 2189 - Strengthens protections against immigration consultant fraud by requiring that corporate surety bonding companies notify local district attorneys or city attorneys offices when the bond required of each immigration consultant in the State has expired or has been cancelled. These bonds allow consumers to recover damages from a consultant in the event of fraud. Currently, local district attorneys and city attorneys offices do not know if a bond has expired or has been cancelled until a victim comes forward.

STATUS: Vetoed by the Governor

AB 2191 - Amends the law so that in cases where a perpetrator is found not guilty by reason of insanity, the victim is notified when the perpetrator is to be released to the community under supervised release (Conditional Release Program). The bill also gives victim(s) or the next of kin the right to submit a written statement for the conditional release hearing before the court.

STATUS: Vetoed by the Governor

AB 2324 - Addresses racial and ethnic health disparities by, among other things, expanding important data collection and bringing government agencies together to address the "root causes" of health disparities.

STATUS: Held in Assembly Appropriations Committee

AB 2408 - Strengthens existing state bilingual staffing requirements and ensures that state agencies are held accountable in complying with existing state law.

STATUS: Vetoed by the Governor

AB 2428 - Strengthens protections for hate crime victims and their families by providing for the issuance of a protective order absent compelling circumstances to restrict perpetrator communication and contact with victims upon release, and enhances the State's ability to rehabilitate hate crime perpetrators with the option of appropriate sensitivity training.

STATUS: Signed by Governor

