



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First 5 Association of California Leaders to Rally at Capitol for Early Childhood Support

Assemblymember Gail Pellerin to Receive Champion for Children Award

What: Advocates for families of young children—who represent county First 5 Commissions across California—will meet with policymakers at the State Capitol on April 9 to advocate for funding, programs, and policies that protect and strengthen California’s youngest children and their families.

First 5 Association of California will hold this year’s Advocacy Day as proposed federal budget cuts jeopardize Medi-Cal coverage for over five million California children—disrupting access to preventive care, developmental screenings, and vital family supports. First 5 county and statewide leaders will urge lawmakers to protect health care, stabilize early childhood funding, and expand proven, community-based supports for families.

As part of the day’s events, First 5 Association will present Assemblymember Gail Pellerin with the 2025 Champion for Children Award in recognition of her steadfast leadership and commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of young children. Representing California’s 28th Assembly District, Assemblymember Pellerin has championed transformative policies to expand early learning, end childhood hunger, and build trauma-informed systems of care.

Event Details:

Who: County First 5 Commissions with executive leadership of First 5 Association of California.

When: News media is invited to interview participants at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, April 9, at the Award Breakfast at the Secretary of State Building, 1500 11th Street, Sacramento.

Following the breakfast, First 5s will walk over to the Swing Space for advocacy meetings at 1021 O Street, Sacramento, 95814.

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About First 5 Association of California

First 5 commissions are trusted, foundational partners to parents and caregivers, dedicated to the health and well-being of children from prenatal through age 5. Together, they serve more than one million children and families each year through an integrated, collaborative system of support. This includes advancing quality early learning and transitional kindergarten, expanding children's health coverage and home visiting programs, and connecting families to developmental and mental health services. With a county-based structure, First 5s enable local decision-making, flexible service delivery, and reduced administrative overlap. Created by voter mandate through Proposition 10 in 1998, First 5s have been essential partners to the State of California for over two decades.

The First 5 Association of California represents all 58 county commissions and is the state's only network focused exclusively on comprehensive early childhood. First 5 Association sets a collective vision, coordinates state advocacy, manages shared knowledge, and strengthens regional and local capacity.

Learn more at www.first5association.org