

Governor's Proposed 2010-11 Budget is a BAD Idea

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- California Voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998. Proposition 10 created First 5 Commissions in every County.
- Proposition 10 uses tobacco taxes to fund programs and services for children 0-5 that are prevention focused. Research overwhelmingly shows investing in our youngest children will give society the greatest return by helping children enter school ready to learn and become productive citizens.
- Proposition 10 created a revenue stream that was to be “hands-off” to politicians and the State because the creators of the Prop 10 knew that when there were financial shortfalls, bureaucrats would first look to cut children’s funding.
- Using Prop 10 dollars to try to balance the budget is predictable, but sad. In 2009, The Governor and Legislature tried to take Prop 10 funds to support state run programs, but California voters overwhelming rejected the idea at the May 2009 special election.
- The Governor’s 2010 proposal is an illegal grab of children’s dollars and that’s why *if* politicians decide to balance the budget by assuming they can take Prop 10 dollars (as they did in 2009), the issue must be brought back in front of voters.
- First 5 reduces pressure on state programs – including the regional centers and county mental health – by providing services to families before they get to those systems or when those systems can’t meet their needs. (e.g. autism support, behavioral consultation, parent child therapy).
- First 5 has increased access to critical prevention services that are saving the state money now and in the future (e.g. prenatal care for at risk-moms, pediatric oral health care, early education programs for children at greatest risk for school failure).
- First 5 Commissions are leveraging millions of federal dollars for money-strapped county departments and community-based service providers.
- The Governor’s 2010 proposal wants to use Prop 10 monies to fund health services for children and expects the public to believe bureaucrats will trickle down monies to our local communities. The truth is, Prop 10 funds are already being used to fund critical health services for children. Each County Commission knows exactly where the gaps are in their communities and they are already working to fund the specific healthcare needs of their local children.
- The governor’s proposal aims to illegally grab Prop 10 funds to plug holes in a variety of agencies within the Department of Social Services pitting them against First 5. Many of these agencies have or are currently partnering with First 5’s.