



Early Childhood Policy Council

Agenda and Transcripts

Virtual Meeting

Thursday, February 26, 2026

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Physical Meeting

1000 G Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

WestEd, 5th floor, Capitol Room

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Welcome
- Review of agenda

2. Immigration Enforcement: Model Policies to Protect Safe Spaces

- Presentation by the Office of Attorney General
- Council discussion and advice on model policies

3. Council Budget Priorities Letter

- Presentation by Council subcommittee
- Council discussion of draft letter
- Possible Council endorsement
- Determine subcommittee for May Revise letter

4. Council Process and Topics that Align with Legislation

- Overview of Assembly Bill 563 provisions and Council process
- Council questions and discussion
- Determine subcommittees
- Invite suggested priority topics

5. General Public Comment

- Members of the public are invited to provide verbal comment

Attendance

ECPC Council Members:

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, Claire Ramsey, Donna Sneeringer, Karla Pleitéz Howell, Kay Ruhstaller, Mary Ignatius, Mayra E. Alvarez, Natali Gaxiola, Ristyn Woolley, Robin Layton, Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez, Socorro Martin, Sonia Jaramillo, Stephen Propheter, Tonia McMillian.

Guests:

California Department of Justice, Christina Riehl

Hosts:

Claire Ramsey, Diana Yactayo, Jateri Willis, Karin Bloomer, Kim Sato, Ramee Serwanga, Estefania Buitrago (SP), Martha Schmitz (SP), Lulu Lun (CN), Xiangyao Bowler (CN).

Meeting Transcript

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Meeting features

Karin Bloomer:

Hey, everyone and welcome to the Early Childhood Policy Council meeting. Before we begin, I'd like to review a few Zoom features with you. We will enable these features after providing these instructions. In a few moments we'll be offering the closed captioning feature in Zoom. To access this feature, you will need to locate the live transcript button at the bottom of your Zoom screen and then click show subtitle. This will allow you to view closed captions in English throughout the meeting. In a moment, we will also offer language interpretation services. I will now turn things over to our interpreters to describe how you can listen to this meeting in English, Spanish, or Mandarin.

Spanish Interpreter:

Click the interpretation symbol in the meeting control. Click the language you would like to hear. We have both Spanish and Mandarin interpretation available for this meeting. And optional to hear the interpreter language only you can click on mute original audio.

[Spanish language 00:01:02].

Mandarin Interpreter:

[Mandarin 00:01:25].

Karin Bloomer:

We will now activate the interpretation feature. Please select your preferred language channel at this time. And a few more items of note. We will be opening up the chat

feature for five minutes at the end of each agenda item to invite written public comment. During the final comment period we will also invite verbal public comment. We'll be asking those who give verbal testimony to limit their time to two minutes in order to invite as many voices as possible to share.

In addition, the slides we share during today's meeting will be posted on the ECPC webpage within the next week. And finally, council members in order to adhere to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Law, you are required to keep your cameras on at all times during this meeting if you are participating remotely. If you're unable to use your camera due to technical difficulties, please let us know. And with that, I will turn things over to the chair.

- [Welcome, Review of Meeting Agenda, and Council Member Introductions](#)

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karin, and welcome everyone. Good morning. Welcome to our first meeting of 2026. I know we have new members at this meeting, so just reintroduce myself. I'm Claire Ramsey. I'm the council chair and one of the chief deputy directors at the Department of Social Services. This morning we are going to do our roll call in our normal way where we have our support team take note of council members who are in attendance. So we won't do a verbal roll call, but we will note your attendance. Thank you for being here.

I'm going to run through a quick review of our agenda. We as always have a very full agenda this morning, but I know we can get through all of our items. During this first section, we are going to take a few minutes to talk about member transition and ask our new members to introduce themselves.

For our second agenda item, the California Department of Justice is here today, and will be inviting input from the council to help inform its model policies to protect child care settings in regard to immigration enforcement. And this, as all of you may remember, was related to a bill that was passed last year, AB 495.

For agenda item three, our council subcommittee was tasked with spearheading the council letter on budget priorities, and they will share that letter and invite specific suggested edits before seeking council's endorsement to submit the letter to the legislative leaders and the governor's office. You should have received the letter. I believe Karin sent it last week, and that's the letter we'll be reviewing.

We will then have a break after that third agenda item. And then for the fourth agenda item and our final item before public comment, we're going to review a new process for developing council recommendations this year and seek volunteers from the council to spearhead that work and start discussing some of what people might be thinking our recommendations they would like to sort of start to put forth for this year. And that's related to a different bill that we discussed at last meeting in November or last meeting in November, AB563.

So as you can see, we will definitely have a full agenda, and then we do have almost half an hour at the end for general public comment. So we appreciate everyone who's here today with us listening and participating from the public as well. We will adjourn at noon and on time.

Now I'd like to share a couple updates regarding council membership and welcome our new members. This is just a reminder, but because the council was established in 2020 and the law states that council members can serve up to six years. So we will this year start to have some of our first council members terming out. So as of January, the term of council member, Janet Zamudio ended and the superintendent of public instruction has appointed her replacement. So I first want to thank Janet for her dedication to this council and for her commitment to improving the early childhood education mixed delivery system. We will really miss her and appreciate all the input and expertise she brought to this council. And we also want to warmly welcome the superintendent's newly appointed council member Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez, and, Shanna, if you're here, we'd like to welcome you and see if you would like to introduce yourself to everyone.

Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez:

Hi, I'm here. Sorry, am I on mute?

Ristyn Woolley:

No, you're there.

Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez:

I'm good. Hi, my name is Shanna, like Banana, Shanna Banana, Birkholz-Vasquez. I'm happy to be with you all today. I'm excited to work on behalf of this group in California's children and families. I currently work at CDE as the associate director of the Early Education Division. Before my role there, I was the administrator of the UPK Implementation and Support Office. And so in that space I was able to work on our mixed delivery work and the universal pre-kindergarten work.

And then now as the associate director, I'm able to continue that but focus really on implementation throughout our state and just really excited to be a part of this group. I feel so strongly about equitable access to high quality early learning experiences and for all of our children of California. And so I am glad to be here.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you so much. And, Shanna, I will get your name right from now on. I apologize. Welcome and thank you. And now next I'd like to welcome one of the governor's newly appointed members, Ristyn Woolley and, Ristyn, if you're here, would you... Oh, I see you. Sorry. I can see the room now. Would you like to introduce yourself as well?

Ristyn Woolley:

Sure. Thank you very much. Good morning everyone. My name is Ristyn Woolley and I am the director of the California Head Start State Collaboration Office. I'm housed within

the Child Care and Development Division in the Department of Social Services, and I'm honored to be appointed to this committee to share this space with so many of you.

Just a little bit about myself, I have over 26 years of experience in the early childhood field in various settings from being a teacher to being an education manager and Head Start, where I implemented an early Head Start Child Care partnership grant, and of course the new Head Start performance standards. I have some time in state ECE policy both with Department of Education and Department of Social Services where I was the co-lead on the Child Care and Development Fund program, a.k.a. the State Plan with a wonderful colleague. I also have experience with QRIS implementation in the Bay Area, and my biggest passion is research in early childhood and education.

As the director of the collaboration office here in California, my role sits within the Head Start Act, and my authority for sitting on the council sits there as well so I'm really excited to be here. And my role is really to enhance collaboration and coordination with Head Start Services, by Head Start agencies with other entities, providing early childhood education and development, mental health, health including dental and vision, nutrition and any other thing that touches Head Start Services.

Just a fun fact about me, I love to do puzzles, really complicated, big puzzles that cover pool tables. So really, really excited to be in this space where I can utilize the puzzle making skills to help with systems building. Thank you, Claire.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Ristyn. And again, Shanna and Ristyn, welcome. We're really happy to have both of you and your expertise on this council. And before we move on to our next segment, I did want to note that if you know of anyone who might be interested in applying for an appointment to the ECPC, we now have put up on the ECPC webpage under general information, a link to the application sites and that includes the governor's application site and the legislature and superintendent of public instruction. So we have links to all three, and I want to thank council member Mary Ignatius for suggesting that we add this link. It's a great addition, and we certainly want to create equitable access to these opportunities to serve on councils like this so thank you again. With that, that concludes our welcome segment. I will turn it over to Karin now to open up our first written public comment set time.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Yes. At this time we will open up the chat feature for the next five minutes so that the public can provide written comment on the first agenda item. And with that, I will turn it back to the chair.

2. Immigration Enforcement: Model Policies to Protect Safe Spaces

- [Presentation by the Office of Attorney General](#)

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karin. And I saw a good reminder and I'm sure a reminder for myself to slow down because I am talking too fast and people are trying to interpret. So I will take a

beat and slow down a little bit. So for our next agenda item, we are really going to talk about the model policies to protect safe spaces for children related to immigration enforcement. And with that, I would like to welcome Christina Riehl from the California Attorney General's office who is here to consult with the counsel on the development of model policies to protect child spaces. And, Christina, welcome. We're really happy to have you here today and look forward to your presentation and the discussion.

Christina Riehl:

I'm happy to be here, and I will just start with an apology. I tried to figure out how to mute the sound when emails come through. Couldn't figure out how to do that, so if you're hearing binging, my apologies. But it is so nice to be here with that. It's nice to be here this morning. I am a deputy attorney general in the Civil Rights Enforcement section, and I'm coordinating our office's work on the model policies for licensed child daycare facilities and California state preschool programs regarding limiting assistance with immigration enforcement to the fullest extent possible, consistent with federal and state law. And making sure to ensure that those facilities remain safe and accessible to all California residents regardless of immigration status. I'm really makes to be here today. There's one of those beeps.

I'm excited to be here today and speak with all of you about this work and really to receive thoughts and feedback regarding what we should be including in the multiple policies which we'll be publishing on April 1st, which right now feels a little bit like to me like tomorrow. We've been meeting with stakeholders to ensure our guidance is as useful as possible and these meetings have included many of the council members. So my apologies for those of you for whom this feels repetitive, but since AB 495 specifically requires consultation with the Early Childhood Policy Council, I'm really happy to be presenting today and to have this opportunity.

I'm going to start today with an overview of AB 495 as it pertains to the early childhood education community. And then I have some specific questions for you that would inform our work in drafting these policies. But I just want to say that we're really open to hear anything you think would be helpful to share. So if we could move on to slide two. Great, thanks.

We'll kind of get into it. So pertaining to licensed child daycare facilities in the California state Preschool programs AB 495 does several things. The bill adds health and safety code section 1597.640 to address family preparedness in licensed child daycare facilities. This new statutory provision prohibits licensed daycare facilities and license exempt California State Preschool program facilities and their employees from collecting information or documents regarding the citizenship or immigration status of children or their family members unless it's required by state or federal law to administer a state or federally supported educational program.

The bill also requires all licensed child daycare facilities to report to the Department of Social Services and to our office, the attorney general's office, any requests for information or access to facilities for immigration enforcement purposes. The bill allows

but does not require licensed exempt California state preschool programs to submit reports to our office, these same reports to our offices.

The bill also contains requirements regarding emergency contact information. A licensed child daycare facility or licensed exempt state preschool program is required first exhaust any parental instruction relating to the child's care found in a child's emergency contact information if a licensee, an administrator or a worker or any other representative is aware that a child's parent or authorized representative is not available to care for the child.

So I've already mentioned the bill requiring our office to issue model policies for license exempt California state preschool programs and licensed child daycare facilities. These model policies, as I mentioned, need to be published by April 1st. And all California State preschool programs must adopt these policies by July 1st of this year. Additionally, any licensed daycare facilities or state preschool programs that have provided information to parents or authorized representatives must ensure that any information or policies or guidance that they have provided to the parent or authorized representatives are revised so that they are consistent with the model policies that we will be publishing.

The bill also amends family code section 6550 to broaden the definition of who qualifies as a relative for purposes of completing a caregiver's authorization affidavit. And it includes other amendments regarding caregiver authorization affidavits. And AB 495 also amends education code section 234.7 to prohibit local educational agencies from allowing voluntary access to non-public areas of school sites for the purpose of immigration enforcement purposes without a judicial-

Claire Ramsey:

Christina.

Christina Riehl:

... warrant or court order. Then can we move on to the next slide please? Thank you. As part of the process in creating the model policies, AB 495 does require that our office engage in consultation with stakeholders including child daycare licensees, the State Department of Social Services, State Department of Education, and the Early Childhood Policy Council. So as I previously alluded to, we've been holding stakeholder meetings since December and many of you have participated in those meetings, but we have also been meeting with the California Department of Social Services and with the California Department of Education.

Claire Ramsey:

I'm so sorry to interrupt you. Would you mind slowing down a little? The translators are having a hard time keeping up.

Christina Riehl:

Absolutely. And I thought I was slowed down, so thank you for the reminder. I'll slow down even further.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you.

Christina Riehl:

Now let me take a breath and slow down this morning. Now that the Early Childhood Policy Council is holding a public meeting, we can formally engage in consultation with the ECPC, and now I'm laughing because I can often not even understand my son when he speaks because he speaks so fast and maybe I know where he gets it. So can we move on to the final side, and we'll get to questions. Thank you.

I really would now like to open the floor to hear your. In particular, we're interested in hearing about how things are working in the field. I thought it might be best for us to go one by one through the questions. And so I'll start with asking how child and family information is gathered. If the council members are hearing any concerns about child and family information that is gathered or are hearing concerns about the information that families are providing or that has to be kept. Open the floor there for any feedback and then we can go through other questions.

- [Council discussion and advice on model policies](#)

Karin Bloomer:

And, Christina, this is Karin, just to support you. I'm happy to help look for the virtual raised hands and hands here in the physical meeting room.

Christina Riehl:

I appreciate that so much.

Karin Bloomer:

Okay.

Claire Ramsey:

And, Karin, I saw one question in the chat just related to a definition of confirming how daycare facility was, what it included for purposes for these policies.

Christina Riehl:

So specifically for the purpose of these policies, it is a license from the California Department of Social Services, so licensed daycare facility. I don't know if that is specific enough or if there are further questions, but I may or may not be able to answer off the cuff.

Claire Ramsey:

So just confirming that that means for CDSS, it does mean that it covers both licensed centers and family child care homes.

Christina Riehl:

Yes, it does. Thank you for that clarification.

Karin Bloomer:

And, Christina, I see a hand from council member Andrea Fernandez Mendoza. Andrea?

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Good morning, council members and chair and, Christina, I do have a question, comment. So in regards to gathering and handling child and family information, one of the things that we're seeing is there is a difference in what is required federally versus what's required under state requirements. And the conflict is which one do we have to follow?

Our measuring stick thus far has been we follow the stricter requirements, but if we're going to be required to collect Social Security numbers or other information on families to submit, that may be in conflict with what our regulations are currently. And as a center-based provider receiving state subsidies, we currently do input family data into the 801 system. We're going to need some guidance around what regulations to follow, or what guidelines and parameters that we will have if the requests for information violate what we're doing or what we're collecting at this time because we don't collect Social Security numbers.

Christina Riehl:

And we have not seen a specific requirement to collect Social Security numbers. So I think you will be, these codes that you see in the guidance. So thank you for that. And, Andrea, I will say also, I'm happy to share my email address if there are some specific regulations that you are concerned about, I'd be happy for you to send those to me so that we can look more closely.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

I think it's more about being mindful about when guidance comes out that if it is in conflict with other guidance, that it needs to be delineated which one who needs to follow and what.

Christina Riehl:

Okay, thank you. I appreciate that.

Karin Bloomer:

I see Donna Sneeringer's hand.

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah, and thank you. I want to echo some of the concerns raised by my fellow council member. We operate Head Start programs in conjunction with and blended with state preschool and general childcare contracts. And I think I can safely say that the directions from Head Start have been quite confusing. We get one set of instructions and then they get, there's a court injunction filed and then they're in the in-between.

And I think from an administrative perspective at the local level, whatever clarity we could have about how to best protect the families and kids in our care, and how to do everything we can to align with California law, it would be helpful. But just wanted to raise that many, many CSPP and general childcare contractors also run direct, federally funded Head Start programs often in the same facility with the same staff. And there's just a lot of confusion and complexity to what we're trying to navigate.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you, Donna. I appreciate that and I will ask if it is all right if we reach out to you with some further questions on some of that. Great, thank you for the thumbs up.

Karin Bloomer:

And I see council member Robin Layton's hand.

Robin Layton:

Hi. Thank you. Good morning, everybody. My question is for Christina, but also CDSS and CDE, who I think are participating today. So we are Title V, We run both CSPP and Infants and Toddlers. We're contracted through Department of Social Services and Department of Education. So my first question is this, you're creating guidance it's my understanding for a bill that's already passed. My question is, actually the concern, I just want to make sure that CDE and CDSS are getting out the guidance like yesterday in real time and often, because I think what we're creating and you're gathering the input, that's great, but things are happening now and contractors, and not just the center-based licensed facilities but the homes, the family child care homes also need it. So I would just like to hear if possible from CDE and CDSS how they're doing in notifying contractors in real time. Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

I know we have Shanna and Stephen from CDE, but I don't know that they have an answer to your question, Robin. Did either of you want to provide any input there, or we can loop back on Robin's question?

Stephen Propeter:

This is Steve. I'm happy to just share because the context of this is the bill that, and there's a requirement in the bill, the policies have to be released by April 1st. And so totally hear the concern and know what's happening in real time and what has been happening for months, right. Well over a year now.

So we have been working with the attorney general's office, the social services to provide feedback and share information about specific to the state preschool context to make sure that the guidance is reflective of the operational needs of a state preschool. It's been a really good collaboration, really appreciated the AG's leadership in this space. Once these specific, so to speaking specifically to these model policies, once those model policies have been released, we will be releasing a management report. We can't get ahead of the implementation of model policies until those model policies are out and just kind of previewing it. The guidance will be pretty high level because a lot of the specifics we anticipate would be including all policy.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Steve, appreciate that. And just confirming from CDSS as well that we are also working closely with the attorney general's office and Christina and her team and have had lots of conversations, but similarly are not getting out ahead of that guidance given as you can kind of hear how complicated all this is and how many the sort of overlapping issues sort of arise in these spaces. So we just don't want to get out ahead and then be wrong about anything and give bad advice. But respect the fact that this is actually happening day to day for people and they're trying to figure things out. Thanks, Robin. Karin, I'll turn it back to you. I don't see any other hands raised, but I don't know if there are any other questions in the chat.

Karin Bloomer:

Yeah, no, I appreciate that. I think it probably best, Christina, turn it back to you. I know you have two more topics here that you're seeking input from, and we do need to finish this agenda item no later than 9:50am.

Christina Riehl:

All right, I'm ready to move on. So the next question I have is what concerns you have about responding to requests for access to early childhood education sites for immigration purposes, or what concerns you're hearing from families related to ICE enforcement? And maybe some of that's already covered, but, Donna, I see your hand up. Thank you.

Donna Sneeringer:

So we have done a pretty deep dive locally in developing an agency policy around how we will manage anyone who shows up at our site, done some extensive training for staff about warrants and what documentation folks have to have. We also have done a lot of signage creating employee only areas to try to limit public access to areas where staff and children are present. It is an evolving situation. We've had multiple incidents in the north San Fernando Valley just in the past two weeks where we've had immigration enforcement in the neighborhood. Have had challenges with families not feeling comfortable coming to pick their children up because of the activity in the area and trying to work through alternate plans with families to have another family member or a person known to the child available to pick the child up. But I mean it is definitely something we're working on in real time, but happy to share with you what we've developed locally if that's helpful to the conversation.

Christina Riehl:

I was about to ask if you certainly specifically the signage was something I was going to ask about if you were willing to share. But anything that you've created and can share, that would be fantastic.

Donna Sneeringer:

We've spent a lot of money on employee only sites.

Christina Riehl:

Think that's a good thing,

Donna Sneeringer:

But happy to share what we've done and have it inform the process for others.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you. I will also share, I alluded to, I heard the concern that April 1st is after these requirements are in place, but at the same time is trying to create this guidance to be as useful as possible. April 1st also feels like tomorrow to us that are trying to get it just right. So the sooner you can send that information, the better. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Karin Bloomer:

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, your hand's next.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Yes, thank you. I want to ditto and echo everything that council member Donna had mentioned. We're doing the same thing in our program. One of the other things that I would like to highlight are the messaging that we can give out to families, to the local community because we don't want to scare them, but we've also had to lock down several times at different centers. We've had ICE take some of our family members unfortunately, and that is a daily occurrence. The families are scared that there should be some guidance about the messaging that can go out and what the legal parameters are for what we can say and do.

I've heard a lot of center-based providers and family child care homes state that they don't know what to do or how to respond or what rights that they have. I know public council put out a webinar recently, which would have, I'm sure you're aware of that had a lot of good resources. But for centers and family child care homes specifically, giving them some actual language and forms and like Donna said, the signage. Those are all really important, especially because we don't have the big legal backgrounds or the legal firepower behind us where other people might. And so supporting family child care homes with that and smaller CBOs would be very much needed in the community so that we all can respond and stay safe within all of the legal parameters that are happening in our world right now.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Karin Bloomer:

Karla Pleitez Howell, I see your hand. Thank you.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

I also want to thank Christina and the state of California for actually putting this on the radar. I think any guidance that comes out will be really, really important to very clearly articulate that we are not going to allow our children to be traumatized or our educators, our childcare providers should not be immigrant police. And I think it is very important to

name that clearly from a values' perspective. In regards to your question, Christina, on some policies, based on what we're seeing, similar to what was just said, it is really important to name the law that articulates that a judicial warrant is needed, a subpoena is needed, a court order, it is not just a badge.

So very clear articulation of what documentation needs to be presented. Because what we are hearing is that when there are knocks on the door, folks do not know if they even have to open. So making that really clear up front would be really, really critical.

The second thing that's really critical, and we know the state is dealing with this, is sort of the protection of records and data. The assumption that records data, information about families or children is just turned over. It is an assumption. It does not have to be that way. We've heard questions about whether or not that is something that needs to be turned over and making that really clear would be helpful.

In addition, I'll name a communication plan. LAUSD had some ICE activity surrounding that school, but not exactly at the school. What they did really tremendously was they've implemented an emergency family communication plan where messages go out that share with families, we are aware that law enforcement or there's activity near campus. That way families are aware of what is happening nearby. And you do not sound the bells of making folks feel unsafe. Very clearly articulating students are safe. We think that's been a really tremendous practice.

Lastly, I'll name there is legal, what our families are experiencing. Yes, there's the very practical legal, there's mental health, there's family navigators that are needed. So any guidance that really talks about community partner rapid response networks and supports that the state can offer. So can schools, R&Rs, other community-based organizations come together to maintain networks that have the legal aid component, the mental health component, family navigators for basic need component, I think would also be really helpful during these times.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you. I appreciate those suggestions. I will take a note.

Karin Bloomer:

Okay. Christina, I imagine you want to gather some input on your last topic area.

Christina Riehl:

Yep. Perfect. Thank you. All right. So then the final area that I'm focusing on is what information do you think is most needed if a child's family member may be detained, deported, or otherwise unavailable? What concerns are you hearing the providers have? What concerns are being raised by families? So focusing on those situations where a child's family member may be detained or deported or unavailable.

Karin Bloomer:

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, please.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Again, thank you for hearing us out today. One of the things that we noticed with the families that this has affected is their immediate mental health need. They are in shock. Then there's the realization of how do I move forward from here?

We've had situations where one of the parent, there's actually another parent in the home that was able to pick up and try to carry on, but there have been situations where there is not. And so the importance of having emergency contacts that can support the child that's left behind are really important.

Families need some support on how do you access caregiver affidavits early, not later after it happens. So to have some type of record in place and ready to go with a backup plan. It's sad to think that we're at this point in our society where we have to do that, but the reality is that it is happening every day.

So I think a little or a good way to go for supporting the families is having a list of resources. That was another thing that we had to provide our families with. Okay, where do you get support for legal assistance to find your loved one? Where do you get support for food?

And there's a loss of income with that other parent being gone. So it's not just legal, the rights aspect and how to find their loved one, but how do they keep the household moving forward until there is some sense of normalcy? So it's not just the legal detained portion, but it affects the whole child and the whole family.

And so thinking of it holistically to provide them with that mental health support as well. I think that's one of the things that's overlooked because they are often in shock and we're seeing some challenging behaviors and some trauma that's happening with our children.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Karin Bloomer:

And Donna Sneeringer

Donna Sneeringer:

I guess Andrea and I are living this real time. We have a lot to say. I plus one to everything she said. The couple of things that we're really grappling with is what if we can't find someone to pick the child up? And so far, thankfully, we have not had that happen, but it is something that we worry about.

And don't want to be in a situation where we need to contact child protective services, law enforcement, but we're trying to make sure we have adequate backup contacts, adequate support systems for families. But that is something we worry about and I think some thought to what that looks like would be helpful.

The other thing, and this is very technical for the state agencies, when these sweeps are happening in neighborhoods and communities, families tend to hunker down and stay home. And many of our programs are reimbursed based on attendance. And I think we need to have some flexibility and breathing room with some of those requirements that the state has.

So that the family doesn't lose their access to service going forward and that our programs aren't held responsible financially if that happens. That sounds very technical, but it is a real issue. And so I think that that type of support is important.

And I did put in the chat, just as the council continues to navigate these really unfathomable issues in many ways for me, I do think we need to have a deeper conversation about the long-term impacts that this is going to have, not just on children and families but on our staff, the workforce in early childhood. And so I really would like to kind of flag that for future conversations.

Christina Riehl:

That's a really good point. I appreciate. There's nothing I can personally do about it right now, but I really appreciate that point being elevated because I'm sure that is something that you're thinking about regularly. It was not something that as we have been diving into this, had come to the top of my thinking. So thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Christina, we have a comment from council member Stephen Propheter here in the room.

Stephen Propheter:

Thanks, Karin. And this is just kind of just in response to what Donna and I saw Andrea put in chat. I kind of go, we did issue some guidance by email on August 5th. So if you're a subscriber to our distribution list and you didn't delete it, you should hopefully have it.

But I'll just kind of specific to attendance, I'll just kind of read from that what we said about that. So as a reminder, regulations allow contractors to adopt reasonable policies, delineating circumstances that would constitute an excused absence for a family emergency. So an acceptable contract or an acceptable policy could include community concerns that make it unsafe for the child to participate in the program as determined by the parent or guardian.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you.

Christina Riehl:

I didn't have to solve the problem. It's been solved. Or at least it's been attempted to be addressed. How about that?

Karin Bloomer:

Okay, Christina, I'll turn it back to you to wrap up. Thank you.

Christina Riehl:

All right. Well, I really do appreciate the thoughtful comments and feedback we've received. I will project, warn. I think there's a lot. We have also heard a lot of desire for concise, easy, quick tools. And there is this reality of the need for something quick and easy and right at my fingertips, and then the depth and complexity of all that we're dealing with.

So certainly our goal is to have a robust guidance with pull-outs that will be more useful as one-on-one tools. So if you do see that we release something that seems big and overwhelming, please don't be daunted about looking through with the appendices. And so we are certainly taking in... I appreciate that we've heard some new feedback today and a lot of it is are things that we've been thinking about and we've heard and so we hope to create a tool that is useful in different ways for different audiences.

Also, once the guidance and model policies are released, I encourage you to still continue to reach out if there are other tools or versions. Or I heard about knowing your rights, those sort of things. If there are other ways that the information should be shared, please let me know and we can see what can be done. Karla, I see your hand up again.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

Yeah, Christina, just on best practices for distributing. As you mentioned, keeping it really simple. Two things for consideration. One, the bill says to contact you all or the state. I would offer also thinking about contacting local folks, folks that are running child care programs already have a lot on their plate and calling the state is a lot. So looking at local networks would be something worth considering in the guidance.

And in regards to the distribution plan, to Steve's point, Stephen's point, the state shares information via email. Any way this body or others can be helpful in the communication distribution plan, would be really helpful to get it to the hands of folks that would need this immediately. So just offering implementation considerations.

Christina Riehl:

Thank you, I appreciate that. And so certainly I will do my best. I would also encourage, there will be a press release when this is released. And so on the Attorney General's website and maybe once I finish with my presentation I'll put it in the chat because I'm not that great at multitasking.

But where you can register to receive the press releases from the Attorney General's office. So that would be the moment it is live, it will be in conjunction with our communications office. So that might be the fastest way to get your hands on it on the guidance and model policies.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you, Christina. And to that point, we can also distribute it to the council once it's published. So that's another way we can help to get it out to all of you and you can get it out to all of your networks.

And I did, just similar to what Steven was saying, loop back. Our child care licensing program did put out guidance last year related to, it is not similar to what Christina's doing with her office, but it was kind of overarching about interactions with immigration, resources that could be available to support on the mental health, and trauma-informed resources.

And then also recognizing licensing as a distinct entity from ICE or immigration enforcement. And how to tell the difference and sort of know when you need to open your door. So just a reminder that that is also some published guidance. But I know to Donna's point, people get a lot and there's a lot happening in real time.

So thank you everyone for all those comments and feedback and all the practical sort of real life experience that you're dealing with. And just acknowledging how heavy and hard this all is and how much you're all caring as well to that trauma and real life impact that you're seeing for yourselves, your staff, your families, and the children every day.

Christina, thank you so much for being here. We really appreciate both your time here today and all the work and effort and time you and your team have put into this resource. I know it'll be really important for everyone in the field.

And we saw some comments in the chat come through too, so we'll share those with you in writing too, just so you have them. Some of them were mirrored in verbal comments, but just so you have sort of the totality of everything.

Christina Riehl:

I appreciate that and really appreciate you giving the time today. Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, thank you so much. And with that, Karin, let me turn it back to you to open up our written chat time as we end this agenda item.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you so much. Yes, at this time we will open up the chat feature for the next five minutes so that the public can provide written comment about this most recent agenda item, agenda item two. And with that I will turn it back to the chair.

3. Council Budget Priorities Letter

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you, Karin. And now we are moving on to agenda item three, which is our council budget priorities letter. We have now over the last few years have a tradition that the

council submits a budget letter after the January release of the governor's budget and the May revise, which happens in May.

And so we appreciate that we had two council members volunteer to serve as a subcommittee to draft the letter, Andrea Fernandez and Miren Algorri. And so a huge thank you to both of you, really appreciate the time and effort put into drafting this letter on behalf of the council. The draft letter has been posted to the ECPC webpage and was emailed to the council members to review in advance. We are going to go through the letter now, where we will both seek any specific changes to the letter and endorsement at the end.

And because we have a couple of new council members, I do kind of want to explain how this will work functionally. First, the subcommittee will provide a brief overview of the letter. Andrea, I'll probably be turning to you for that. We'll ask if council members have any questions for clarification.

And then we'll see if we have any council members requesting specific changes to the letters. We do only have half an hour for this segment. And what we've learned from practice is we can handle incorporating specific changes, but once stuff starts to get to heavy wordsmithing, it tends to not be as fruitful. So we try to avoid the wordsmithing and stick to specific language changes.

It is really helpful. Karin is very adept at doing this in real time, but if you have specific language, it's really helpful for you to be really clear about what words you want, where inserted. Sometimes it's helpful to put that in the chat if you have it laid out so we can make sure we're capturing it clearly.

And then I just want to note for a process point, that council members who are a member of the administration or our constitutional office, like the Department of Education, abstain from endorsements. So when we take our endorsement, we're really looking to non-administration, non-constitutional office holders to either say yea or nay on endorsement.

And with that I will turn it over to Andrea. And I know we weren't sure if Miren had joined yet, but Miren of course if she's here as well, happy to have her join with us as well. So, Andrea, I'll turn it to you. Thank you.

- [Presentation by Council subcommittee](#)

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Thank you again, Christina. And thank you, Chairperson, and members of the council. Good morning everyone. Our subcommittee was tasked with drafting the budget letter for your consideration. I'm not going to read it word for word because you all received this beforehand and have the opportunity to look it over, see if there's any sticking points for you.

But I am going to highlight the whys of why we put the letter together the way we did. We recognize that California is navigating a difficult financial landscape including multi-year deficits and the ongoing cost of the wildfire recovery. However, as we face these challenges alongside shifting federal policies, we must remain steadfast in protecting our state's youngest and most vulnerable residents.

As usual, in the letter we acknowledge the progress and historic investments that were already made, but we focused our corporate budget priorities around issues that are ongoing and currently affecting our state. So to build on our historical foundation, our 26-27 budget recommendations focus around four critical pillars.

The rate reform and fair compensation. We continue to urge the state to fund the rate reform that reflects the true cost of care and the current economic realities. We must provide ongoing financial support to attract and retain a workforce that reflects California's cultural and linguistic diversity. And it still, as it has been difficult to attract teachers to keep them in the field, we're losing centers and family child care homes quite rapidly. So in order to sustain that, we need to make sure that we are funding the rate reform that is the true cost of care.

The second core value point was the promise of increased access. It is vital that we fully fund the promised 200,000 child care spaces by this budget year, plus the additional 44,000 slots that were originally pledged. We also ask for the commitment to backfill the declining Prop 64 revenue to ensure that no existing spaces are lost.

What we're finding is that they keep getting pushed down the road. It's like the can that keeps getting kicked further, but we're losing spaces. Like I mentioned, we're not funding it as well as we should be to maintain the workforce and the financial stability of the centers and family child care homes, which is our next point.

Financial fiscal stability and resilience. Providers need protection from fiscal shocks. As we know issues preventing full enrollment are still affecting us. And the recommendation moving towards enrollment based funding models, specifically an 85% contract earning floor, will help ensure operational stability regardless of attendance and enrollment fluctuations.

Being able to stabilize the workforce and stabilize programs will help not only bring in the stability of the field, but retain members of the field and the ECE workforce who are constantly being told, "Oh, we don't know where our funding is. We don't know if we're getting a COLA." So providing that stability by moving towards this model will help programs and family child care homes be able to project out and have operational stability, which helps us plan better and helps us provide services that are consistent and ongoing.

Our last but not least highlight and value point is the health and housing security. Our families are under attack. We know that vital services and the funding for services for our families has been cut federally. We must protect medical access through continuous

coverage policies and maintain housing grants for our unhoused population, many of whom are women of color and children of color.

And so we felt that it was important to address the overarching issues that we're facing our state, that we're seeing every day. And we know it's a time of uncertainty with what's going on federally, but California must continue to be a sanctuary of stability for our children. And we must ensure equitable access for Black, tribal, immigrant, and low-income families as well as children with disabilities.

And as a council, we hope that this letter can send that message and that we can all support it to ensure that our children remain the state's top priority. So I turn it back over to the chair and open it. Any comments or discussion?

- Council discussion of draft letter

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you, Andrea. Really appreciate you walking us through the letter. And again, really thank you so much for drafting.

Let us start first to see if anyone just has any clarification questions for Andrea about the letter or about anything she said there before we jump into any actual feedback. And please feel free to raise your hands using the raise hand feature.

I'm not seeing any requests for clarification. I'll just give it 30 more seconds to make sure I'm not missing anybody. Oh, Robin, please.

Robin Layton:

Sorry I don't have clarification questions. I'll wait until we get to the feedback.

Claire Ramsey:

You're just getting in line. You're ready for wordsmithing the letter.

Robin Layton:

I guess so. Yeah.

Claire Ramsey:

No, appreciate that. All right then. Well, why don't we, since I don't see any requests for clarification, why don't we start with you, Robin, on any feedback for the letter?

Robin Layton:

I think the letter is fantastic. Thank you so much, Andrea. I think that the way you summarized it for the public is also fantastic.

As a council, so I don't have any suggested changes. I just have some questions for Department of Social Services. So I take this council position very seriously. And I am one of the original drafters of having these letters go from the council to the legislators.

And then I take this letter and I use it when I do my advocacy or my education or whenever I'm talking to a legislator or a legislative staff. I use this and it's a great tool.

I was also on the rate committee. We spent over three years, the public also spent a lot of time helping come up with what the true cost is. In the first bullet, I'm not requesting or suggesting any changes. What I would like is if Department of Social Services could put in the chat what the true cost ended up coming out of the rate committee.

So the rate committee, I don't know what it was called at the end, finished, and now there is a true cost. In order for us to take this letter and ask the legislators to fund the true cost, we need that amount. Doesn't need to go in the letter, if you could just give that to us and release it, that would be very, very helpful.

Otherwise, they're going to ask us and we're going to start, we're going to say what I'm saying, which is we spend over three years and we don't have the amount. So how can they fund something or even consider funding something if we can't give them the amounts or the report or whatever? So if Department of Social Services could put that in the chat or email the council members, I think that would be very helpful. Actually necessary more than helpful. Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Robin. We can take that back. And, Karla, please?

Robin Layton:

I'm sorry to interrupt, but when you say take it back, I know that the amount is established already but we don't have it. Is it something that Department of Social Services could give us today?

Claire Ramsey:

I'm checking with the team right now, Robin, so just give me a second. Yeah.

Robin Layton:

Thank you, Claire. Thank you.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

I also echo Andrea, this is a tremendous letter and fully supportive of it. If folks would be open to a friendly amendment, one is adding two bullet points on immigrant families and the safety net.

Specifically calling out the wellbeing of our immigrant children and families and including bolstering legal services just given the conversation we had at the beginning of the call. I know the administration has looked at that in the past. I think it'd be helpful to continue to advocate for that for our families.

And the second is really looking at strengthening the safety net policies just given what HR1 is doing to our families. And I'm happy to add language in the chat.

The second to last paragraph, if we could add a sentence that talks about ECPC, looking forward to sharing our assessment and proposal in the upcoming annual report so that the ledge sees the through line from these discussions. The letter and proposals we will bring back in the annual report. So offering that as friendly amendments as additions. But very fully supportive and really, really appreciate the work. Andrea, we know how much time something like this takes.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

And I love your suggestion about adding that piece in to circle it back around. That's a great suggestion. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

And, Karla, just to clarify, you're about to put the specific language request in the chat?

Karla Pleitez Howell:

Yes, and I am trying to post it now. Yes. I'll put it in the chat.

Karin Bloomer:

And just noting council member Mary Ignatius for suggesting an addition and I'll do my best to look for it here in the chat. But if you could please suggest the specific sentence you'd like added, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Robin Layton:

Could I just add, I think these are fantastic recommendations. I would just caution if there's any way we could keep this to two pages so that when we're going around, we want to make sure that they read it. And so we've always tried to keep it at two pages. If that means reducing the font, so be it. But if we go to three pages, it's harder. So I have no suggestions on how to do that.

Claire Ramsey:

And I'm thinking we'll give just a second for Karin to put in those suggested edits from Karla and then let people read them and see where we're landing, to Robin's point about length of the letter. So we may have silence here for a moment, but it's intentional silence.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Would it be possible, because we're trying to phrase these as policies, policy stances they can get behind. So would it be behoove us to say, protecting the safety and wellbeing of our immigrant children and families rather than ensuring? Because it's making it into a policy actionable. Ensuring may get some pushback. But protecting and supporting the safety would be something that they could stand behind. Because ensuring is promising something they may not be able to support.

Karin Bloomer:

I've made that change, Andrea. And again, we'll just wait for it if there's concerns about that. Oh, sorry just making a note. I don't know if others ... There's some kind of message on the screen, and WestEd, if this is a system comment box that you could close, I don't believe it's on my screen, but ... Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

Any other comments on edits to the letter or questions about what's been added?

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Karin, can you scroll up? Can we see if we added for Mary Ignatius' comment on the ...

Karin Bloomer:

Yes, please, I would welcome guidance on the language change that's being proposed.

Claire Ramsey:

Mary had said in the chat related to this Prop 64 one, if we could add, "After spaces are maintained and expanded," and then a sentence that says, "inaction will result in families being disenrolled or children losing access to child care."

Mary, does that capture? I know you're trying to multitask, Mary, does that capture what you want? And thanks for tagging that, Donna.

Karin Bloomer:

Oh, "Spaces are maintained." Right, okay. She's saying yes? Okay.

Claire Ramsey:

Yes, thank you. And then she had one more comment on the Medi-Cal paragraph to make sure it says, "Health access for young children, families, and early educators."

Karin Bloomer:

"Young children ..."

Claire Ramsey:

"Families, and early educators."

Karin Bloomer:

I think the continuous coverage policies, forgive me, may be specific to children, but I'm not an expert.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

I don't think the addition would deter from that. I think it would just ... Because it's protecting coverage. Yeah, so I think that would be okay just as an addition without changing the rest of the text.

Karin Bloomer:

So just scrolling through, sorry, I'm also looking on the screen here. So this change here and then this additional ... Sorry, I'm scrolling up so folks can see it here. This additional reference in the healthcare bullet. And you all have already reviewed the other proposed changes. And Robin Layton, also hearing the urge to have it be two pages, which is, again, something we can work on in terms of formatting.

Claire Ramsey:

And just lifting up, Mary was also acknowledging because the federal administration has, I'll quote her, "Been such a wild year under a wild federal administration," so maybe if it goes over two pages that-

Karin Bloomer:

So be it.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, so be it. This might be the year for it, but Robin, we hear you on the, "Let's make this useful and make sure people actually get to the end of the letter." I don't think we're that far over onto three though.

Karin Bloomer:

No.

Claire Ramsey:

It looks like we're pretty ... Oh, yeah, actually, we're very ... I think we can do it.

Karin Bloomer:

Good. We can do it.

Claire Ramsey:

I feel like some manipulation of margins could get us-

Karin Bloomer:

Exactly.

Claire Ramsey:

... to two pages pretty quickly.

Karin Bloomer:

Which I won't work on now.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you, Karin, appreciate that. I also thank you for doing this in real time. I hate typing in front of everyone in real time. It's like you forget where all the keyboard letters are.

Anything else people want to put in as edits or suggestions before we do our request for endorsement? And I will turn it over to Andrea for that, but also noting that Dr. Ramos, our surgeon general, is stepping out for a minute but would've abstained from a vote as part of the administration anyway.

Karin Bloomer:

And just quickly, Chair Claire Ramsey, once you pass it back to Andrea for any final thoughts, I think we can, with your help, I can take the lead on the roll call vote.

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, thank you. Thank you. And we were confirming that we needed to do a roll call on this. So yes, thank you, Karin, for reminding me.

Okay. I'm not seeing any other hands raised. Andrea, let me turn it back to you to see if you have any last thoughts or anything final you want to close up on the letter.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Just thank you, everyone, for your continuous support and your additions to the letter. I think this is going to be a very powerful one and really speaks to our commitment to the children and families of California, and not only that, but our staff and all of the workforce that we are trying to support with it. So if there are no other questions or comments, I would ... Do I give it back to you, Chairperson, for the roll call?

Claire Ramsey:

You can hand it back to me and I'll turn it over to Karin.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Oh, I'm sorry.

Claire Ramsey:

No, no, no. Thank you. Again, one more just big thank you so much, Andrea. Thank you, Miren, in absentia for working on this letter and putting it all together. It is very powerful and as always we appreciate that you take the time and energy to put this all together on behalf of the council.

So with that, let me turn it over to Karin. We are going to do a roll call on endorsement to make sure that we have accurately recorded that for purposes of the meeting. And Karin, I'll turn it to you.

- [Council endorsement](#)

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. So in a moment I'm going to read each council member's name aloud. When you hear your name, please respond with one of the following: if you endorse submitting this letter, please say, "Aye"; if you oppose submitting this letter, please say,

"No"; and if you are a member of the administration or constitutional office or for any other reason you want to abstain, please say, "Abstain."

All right. And with that, I will read off the names of council members in alphabetical order by last name.

Miren Algorri, who I understand is absent.

Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez?

Shanna Birkholz-Vasquez:

Abstain.

Karin Bloomer:

Lisete Frausto, who I believe is absent.

Mary Ann Hansen, who I understand is absent.

Natali Gaxiola?

Natali Gaxiola:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Karla Pleitéz Howell?

Karla Pleitez Howell:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Mary Ignatius I believe has left us unfortunately.

Sonia Jaramillo? Sonia, are you still with us? Sonia's left.

Robin Layton?

Robin Layton:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Socorro Martin?

Socorro Martin:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza?

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Tonia McMillian?

Tonia McMillian:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Stephen Propheter?

Stephen Propheter:

Abstain.

Karin Bloomer:

Diana Ramos had to step away. She's a member of the administration though. She would be abstaining so I will take note of that.

Claire Ramsey?

Claire Ramsey:

Abstain.

Karin Bloomer:

Kay Ruhstaller?

Kay Ruhstaller:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

Donna Sneeringer?

Donna Sneeringer:

Aye.

Karin Bloomer:

And Ristyn Woolley?

Ristyn Woolley:

Abstain.

Karin Bloomer:

Have I missed a council member who's present? Okay, the ayes have it. So this letter with its amendments will be submitted to the legislative leaders and governor's office at the top of this letter. Thank you so much.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you again, everyone, and thank you, Karin, for the roll call.

And I got to give us credit. We are ahead of schedule, everyone. It's a 2026 miracle and we are coming up to a break. We have a 10-minute break scheduled and I think what we can do is it's 10:15 now. Originally our break was from 10:25 to 10:35. We're going to adjust that. Our break will be from 10:15 to 10:25. So please return at 10:25 and we will move into Agenda Item Number 4. Karin, I know we do have a chat that we will open up for members of the public to comment on the budget letter item we just went through.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you so much, Claire. And perhaps during the break, council members could consider whether they're willing to volunteer for the subcommittee for the May revise letter, and when we come back, Claire, you could take names for that before we move on as well.

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, thank you, Karin.

Karin Bloomer:

Yes, of course. And so that's right, at this time we've completed this agenda item and we'll take public comment during the duration of this break. And as I understood from the chair, we will be returning at 10:25 AM Pacific Time. We'll see you all then.

BREAK

Karin Bloomer:

Okay. Sorry, I'm hearing some feedback in the room.

Claire Ramsey:

All right. Are we okay now?

Karin Bloomer:

Can you all hear me virtually?

WestEd Support:

Karin, you're good to go.

Karin Bloomer:

Good to go? Okay, thank you. Thank you for the thumbs-up, everybody.

All right. So appreciating that we're coming back from break and if council members, if you could please put your cameras on. If the cameras aren't working, please let us know, and once the chair is in a position to pick conversation back up, we will begin.

And I'll just preview for the chair that our next council meeting being on May 27th, this would mean that if the council has an interest in a May revise letter as it has in the past, that there would need to be a subcommittee that spearheads that as was the case for this budget letter as well. So I'll turn it back to the chair for her to be seeking any volunteers for that. Thank you.

- [Determine subcommittee for May Revise letter](#)

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karin, and thanks for keeping me honest. I jumped over something in our agenda and did not ask for the subcommittee before the break, so I apologize for that.

As you know, we do subcommittees of two so we don't have an issue with too many council members assembling in an unnoticed meeting. So we are looking for two volunteers again. I see Andrea raise her hand and I'm hoping it's because she's so excited to volunteer again, and I saw a nod, but do you want to? Okay, fantastic. So anyone who wants to volunteer with her knows they'll have an excellent partner in all this work. Do I have a second volunteer to join Andrea in drafting this May revise letter?

And Karin, let me ask quickly, if no one ... I realize we have had to have some people drop off today and not everyone was able to make it. If someone else does want to join but can't say yes at this meeting, do they have any opportunity to do that or are they ...

Karin Bloomer:

Yes, absolutely. Great. Thank you for the question. What I can certainly do is following this meeting, send an email to the council just inviting any other volunteer from the council to join council member Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, and should no one be able to volunteer, we certainly could have a one-member subcommittee by a very powerful and very experienced subcommittee member.

4. [Council Process and Topics that Align with Legislation](#)

- [Overview of Assembly Bill 563 provisions and Council process](#)

Claire Ramsey:

I both take it as a vote of confidence in the work you are obviously doing on all this already, but we will see if we can get you a second subcommittee member to support all this work. Thank you. And I know the whole council thanks you for volunteering to do the May revise letter. And as Karin mentioned, our next meeting will be after the May revise is released, so the timing works quite well on all of that, but it doesn't leave a lot of time between the meeting and there May revise release for the drafting of the letter, so thank you again for volunteering.

And with that, I will turn to our last agenda item, which is about both council process and some topics that align with recent legislation, specifically Assembly Bill or AB 563 from Assembly Member Jackson. And there are a couple of things for us to talk about in this agenda item.

So basically, first I want to start out by referencing the email I sent earlier this week to council members and just reminding everyone we talked a little bit about this bill at the end of our last meeting in 2025. I provided a brief overview of the enacted legislation because this bill had provisions in it that impacted our council work. The bill specifically amended the statute pertaining to the ECPC and it included a provision that basically invites the council to develop policy proposals and budget requests related to facility needs, workforce needs, and family access.

One way we already do weigh in on those is through our council letters, which obviously we just voted on one and we will vote on another one in our May meeting. So that's already one avenue, but this is a second avenue that we have now that's been established to provide recommendations to the legislature for them to consider. What we are working toward is being able to have those recommendations drafted and ready to be voted on for our November meeting. But that obviously means that one of the big activities of 2026 will be making that bill into reality, turning the council's work towards some of that recommendation work and thinking.

As such, we would like to think about how we can pursue a new approach to our council work in the council meetings where we're both using some time at council meetings but also using subcommittee structure and our advisory committees for feedback so that we are really driving toward council member-led recommendations. We're really hoping that it's going to be driven by the council members, written by the council members, facilitated by the council members.

And one piece of feedback I think heard very loud and clear is that people want to feel like the council is moving forward, actionable, meaningful recommendations, and I'm hoping this structure is going to lead us to that. Acknowledge that this will be our first year doing it, so there may be bumps in the road, there may be things that work well, things that are a little clunky or don't work great. And so we can reevaluate at the end of this year and in our first meeting next year if we think some changes to the process are necessary or we've done something that's like, "Keep this, don't keep this, change that," so we can be thoughtful in our approach and we don't have to make a decision today that lasts in perpetuity.

We think that the way we can organize this work, and this is the proposal I'm bringing to you all, is to really think about those three categories, facility needs, workforce needs, and family access, and establish up to three subcommittees, one for each category, based on what you think the most relevant topics are to pursue as recommendations. So we can do all three topics. If you think one or two of them are more or higher priorities and want to focus on that, we can do that. But that would be the request is to set up these three subcommittees.

Each subcommittee, just like with our budget letter subcommittees, would be two council members. So in a couple minutes I will be asking about volunteers, so think about whether you want to volunteer. Again, if people think we don't want to focus on all three, that's too much divided attention or we don't actually have enough volunteers to staff or to cover three committees subcommittees, we could do one or two. And the idea will be that those subcommittee members will spend time between council meetings working on these recommendations and then at council meetings we'll be having discussion about those recommendations as we move forward throughout the year. And also, those subcommittees will be engaging with the two advisory committees to also gain recommendations and input from them as well so that it's really feeling like we're getting the holistic sense of this group, including, excuse me, our advisory committees to really weigh in on these recommendations.

And what you will need to do as part of that subcommittee is identify the particular issue or issues within a category that you're going to address this year, describe the challenge or gap that needs to be addressed, and then start to develop the draft recommendations, obviously again with being able to bring them back and getting input and getting the discussion of the council at the quarterly meetings. And this will basically lead to evolving content and feedback and hopefully what can lead us to, by the last quarterly meeting of the year in November, is having a package of recommendations that can be voted on and submitted to the legislature by the end of the year as requested by AB 563. That means that basically every council meeting going forward, one agenda item will be to focus on the subcommittees and these recommendations so that we can continue to move this work forward.

So before I ask for volunteers, let me see if there's any questions about any of this. And hold on one second. I'm just going to open. Thank you. Sorry, I had closed my chat and I could see there was some chat. Yeah, Robin, please.

- [Council questions and discussion](#)

Robin Layton:

Thank you, Claire, I do have a couple questions, but first, did I hear you say that the idea would be that this could turn into legislation?

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, it's a good question. The way it's framed up in the bill, AB 563, is that it is submitting recommendations to the legislature, but I think that was what Assembly Member Jackson was trying to get at was if you have ideas for legislation or changes, please tee them up for the legislature. I think he's wanting the council's input on things like that. So I think it is an opportunity. If you think very specifically there's legislation ideas, I think that's very welcome within this framework.

Robin Layton:

Okay, so thank you. So my questions are really about this whole concept and how this would be different from, let's say, the work that we did with the White Paper Committee,

the Blue Ribbon Commission, the master plan, the rate and quality rate groups. How would this be different and why do we need to be different when we just passed this beautiful letter? And our number one priority has been from the beginning funding the true cost of care. That is something that comes up at every meeting. We had over three ... Basically all of these other groups that I talked about has always been about that. And it has to do with once you have funding the true cost, then your staffing crisis could go away, your facilities issues could go away. And what was the other committee? Access.

So I'm not sure we need three committees. I think maybe what we could do is, first of all, I'm still waiting for the answer of what the true cost is. So hopefully, before this meeting ends, CDSS could put that in the chat. I think what we need to do is turn our attention to funding the true cost. And if that can turn into a bill, that's great, but I don't know if it needs to because the legislature said, "Have this rate committee tell us what the true cost is and then we'll figure out if we can afford it." To me, that's very simple. I'm not sure what all the other council members think where there's not very many council members. So breaking up into three subcommittees with two each, maybe again, it can fall under the budget letter.

Those are just my suggestions. People are really frustrated and burnt out with the fact that this is just ... And I've been one of the ones from the beginning. It's like, "What is the purpose of this council? Are they listening to us? Let's put some meat behind what we say." So this is a good thing, but I don't support having three subcommittees to do the work that's already done. It's already done.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Robin. I have thoughts about what you just said. I actually did get the information from the team. It was in our July quarterly report around the true cost of care. So I'm putting that in the chat right now.

Robin Layton:

Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

So you'll have that information. Sure. I hear you. And let me see what Karla's comments are and see if there are other comments and then we can loop back because this is exactly the conversation we're hoping to have around the workload and the purpose. Yeah, Karla, please.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

Good. Claire, thank you so much for giving this some thought. As the legislation comes up, there's different ways of pulling it together, so really appreciate a proposal.

I agree that we might not need as many as Robin is sharing, but I do think we are going to need some subcommittees. So would offer, as we look at family access and in light of AB 563 calling out elevating priority legislation, I think it's important for us to consider

what's happening at the federal level and having a subcommittee that really looks at federal policy and systems resilience.

Right now, many of us, and I'll speak for our organization, we are often responding to urgency need. Given what's happening in Los Angeles with ICE raids, it is looking at how do we immediately respond to make sure to keep our families safe? Then all of us have experienced federal cuts or freezes that destabilize and create instability for our families. And I think that work is very, very, very critical. And I also believe that what the ECPC can offer to the leg and the administration is a responsibility to think beyond that moment and think about long-term.

So I would offer either a separate subcommittee or, Claire, within the framework you provided under family access that we look at things impacting California from a federal point of view because I don't think we're going to be able to sustain what our families need alone by California dollars and we need to look at long-term. So the subcommittee, you asked what specific issues would be looked at, what are some of the gaps? And I would offer that a federal subcommittee can offer this to the administration and to the leg:

One, we could look at analyzing the impact of federal actions on families now, and I think that would be really important information for our elected officials to have.

Two, I think we have to think about what it will look like for rebuilding. We just talked about immigrant families and we have to think about what rebuilding for families, immigrant families will mean.

And I think that thirdly, California has a really unique position to offer solutions. They might not be something that our federal administration listens to now, but we have to be prepared for rebuilding. And I think this is the body that could really, really help with that as we think about longer term.

So for the framework you offer, Claire, if that fits within family access, but I think we have to call out federal response and I think this is the body to provide some of that feedback to our elected officials in the administration.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karla. Tonia?

Tonia McMillian:

Thank you, Claire. So 100% I am with Robin and what she shared. It's almost like we're recreating the wheel. So much work has already been done. And I also agree with Karla, what you're putting forth also. But I'm having a little difficulty because if we are looking to add another subcommittee, but then we are no longer allowing subcommittee members to take part or have input in the full council meeting, I don't know. That's not making sense to me.

Claire Ramsey:

So Tonia, can I-

Tonia McMillian:

So remove-

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you. Go ahead, finish your thought. Sorry.

Tonia McMillian:

Oh, no, no, go ahead.

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, I just wanted to clarify that. Subcommittee members will come from the council so they will have full participation. The distinction was, and I know this is just, there's too many terms of council members, subcommittees, advisory committee members, it's the advisory committee members which are separately appointed. That was the split I was talking about in the email, not the subcommittees, which would be council members. So just to clarify that one point. Sorry.

Tonia McMillian:

Okay. I hope I'm not the only one who did. I was, I'm a little confused a little bit. Okay.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Tonia. Anything else you wanted to add there? I didn't want to cut you off. Sorry.

Tonia McMillian:

No.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Thank you. Andrea?

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Couple of questions. So are these groups or these topics categories specific in AB 563 or are those flexible? Because if they're not flexible, then we would need to stay under the umbrella term but then fit these issues in. So like Karla said, the immigration issues our families and staff are facing would fit under family access and actually workforce too.

So if you could clarify that, that would help me frame because it would make sense to keep them under the three if those were required. But if not, then I can see immigration is a huge issue right now.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, to that specific question, I'm trying to find the language really quickly. It does call out those three categories, but I think structurally, we aren't bound to that. If that's not ... What I'm hearing very clearly is nobody has any interest in recreating work that's already been done and having a subcommittee for subcommittee purposes. So absolutely hear that. So I think we can be creative in how we think about pulling these recommendations together.

Again, I guess I would throw it back to the council as a question to that, again, very valid point that you've been part of lots of councils and lots of work groups and lots of task force, and it's like I think there's two ways to think about this. I think you certainly could say, "We think we're fulfilling the obligations of 563 through these budget letters or through these other recommendations we've published in the past, and we'd like to point legislators back to." Certainly could think about that.

However, if there are things where people want to say, "That work is still valid, but there are current actionable problems happening right now that we think budget or legislation could be responsive to," and that is the focus of these letters because we're theoretically doing these recommendations yearly, we're hyper focused on what is needed now and what is needed in 2026. You could still, of course, have larger overarching priorities and recommendations around true cost of care or other big systemic fixes, but you could also say, "What we want to dig in on these recommendations this year," maybe it's the intersection on immigration, maybe it's the intersection, to Karla's point, on federal changes that are impacting the state and how the state should potentially respond to that.

So I think that we're very open, and this is exactly what we're hoping for. We really want the council members leading what they think will be helpful to produce for the legislature, and again, not just to make work on your plate when you're already too busy. So what are the sense of what would be helpful, that feels like it would be helpful actually to all of you to be lifting up to the legislature at the end of this year as recommendations? And I understand Assembly Member Jackson to really want this council to feel like it has a more direct link. This was the point of the bill to really say, "I want to hear from the council. I want to hear what you think, what you need, what you want." So I don't also want people to lose that opportunity.

Sonia, please.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Just wondering because you're mentioning the option of one or the other one perhaps, I'm wondering if one would carry more power, for lack of a better word, over the other.

I mean, which one is more impactful when it comes to trying to make the changes, what that we all know are needed to make our services better for our community and our children?

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Sonia. Any feedback on that from people around what would be most helpful or what might be highest priority? Yeah, Karla, please.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

I would offer, when I think about the whole ECE system in California, really what I appreciate about this bill and the value is this body is recognized as experts. And I think there are diverse issues impacting families.

So, would offer that we could do both sort of not an either or, but offer to do both. And happy to volunteer in a committee that helps advance some of the issues we discussed about earlier to make sure that we're lifting up family access.

But just offer that both would be really helpful during these times for families.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karla. Natali.

Natali Gaxiola:

And just a thought, and as I'm listening to all of this and I see the function. The one thing I do hear is the want and the need to hear voices elevated in a structured way that actually court will easier I guess to communicate in regards to legislation.

And I think we're all here wanting to make a true impact and we know that when it comes down to legislation, that's where the impact actually really affects or it's taken across at least our state.

But the one thing I kind of wanted to point out, and as I participate in this council and I tried to participate in other areas, as a practitioner myself, as a preschool teacher, I feel that our voices are very needed in these different forums.

And we're the ones working with the families and the kids such as the providers are also. But it is difficult to participate because we're working with kids just getting the time.

And so I'm thinking and I'm like, "Oh, I would love to participate in one of these subcommittees," but meeting at other committees and gathering, it's not very feasible for somebody who's working with kids on a daily basis.

So, it's not really stating one or the other, but it's just maybe if some thought can be given in the functioning of these to really get people who are working directly with children and families to be able to participate not only in the subcommittees in different committees.

And hearing that that's one of the obstacles of actually getting the voices of, I heard somebody use, so the word, experts, and I think we're all experts in different ways.

But getting more, I would love to see more of an impact that as the teachers or providers that directly work with kids make. So it's just kind of a statement to put out there.

Claire Ramsey:

No, appreciate that. And do just want to acknowledge the challenge of asking for additional time when it's already hard to step away from a classroom or from families and children, direct work. Andrea, please.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Just to, like Karla had mentioned whatever the committee turns out to be, I would also like to be a participant on that. And I have boots on the ground so I can also bring in that perspective.

I think it's a really important task and opportunity and we need to take that opportunity for what it's worth. I know we've all put in a lot of hours on these issues over and over, but if this is our little nose under the tent, then we've got to take it for what it's worth and run with it.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Andrea. Robin.

Robin Layton:

Yeah. I like the idea, now that we're talking more about it, the fact that only two of us could talk to each other at a time. If we have three subcommittees that's six people working on and going deep into these priorities.

What I would suggest is that, again, we don't reinvent the wheel. We take our bullets from our budget letter and divide those into three subcommittees. And the six people go deep into turning this into actual proposals that could actually get some funding behind them.

I don't want to take this letter around and then have subcommittees come up with a different priority when we already know these are our established priorities as of today. And then when we're done with all of this, I do have a question about the July quarterly report, Claire. Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

Sure, Robin. And I'll just say we also do have time at this meeting to talk through to your point about it's a small number of people trying to pull together a lot of information.

We do have time on this agenda today to have the council start talking about that digging in and more specific recommendations. So, just acknowledging that the framework you're providing may help us.

We could use that today, actually, to help us if that's something the council wants to do.

Robin Layton:

I think that's great. That's great. Yeah.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Yeah. And Socorro, please.

Socorro Martin:

Thank you so much. Yes, I guess I agree with most of everybody. Everybody brought up great points, but why is it that we do need to duplicate the advisory groups and setting up subcommittees?

Like everybody has mentioned, it seems like we're reinventing the wheel.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Socorro. Actually, whether or not the advisory committees sort of functioned in this way was one of the things we thought about. I'd be interested, Tonia, I don't want to put you on the spot, but as chair of the workforce advisory committee, do you have any thoughts about the overlap between the subcommittees and the advisory committees?

Certainly we want the input there and there are obviously council members who are members of both. But didn't also want to take the council meeting and put work onto the advisory committees that they couldn't necessarily easily respond to. So.

Tonia McMillian:

Okay. So, I don't know for some reason when you were talking, the sound dropped on me, so I didn't hear the-

Claire Ramsey:

Do you want me to say that again?

Tonia McMillian:

Yes.

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, sure. Just to Socorro's point about, we do have advisory committee meetings and theoretically topically they could also be looking at these issues. It was something that we were thinking through. I was talking through with Karin a little bit, too, as a possibility.

It just seemed hard to lay that additional work on the advisory committees without really having their input. So I don't think it's an off the table thing, it's just more of, is that something that would be functional and be workable given what other work that might be happening in those advisory committees?

Tonia McMillian:

So, for some reason, my WiFi, I keep getting an unstable message. And so, yeah, your voice keeps dropping on me. But I think I get where you're going.

I don't know. To be honest with you, I have an uneasy feeling right now because... and I feel like maybe it's me and I'm not comprehending everything but the removal.

So, we're going to... Y'all bear with me right now because I'm trying to process. I'm trying to process.

Claire Ramsey:

Tonia, just so you know, you are dropping out for us a little bit, too. Your sound is dropping off. I don't know if you want to go off camera and see if that helps because we're in the same-

Tonia McMillian:

What I'd like to do is, are we going to make a decision? I'm going to go off camera. But is this being presented as something that we're going to make a decision about today, or are you just presenting this?

Because number one, the absence of Mary in this conversation, because it does directly affect the subcommittees. And I like, I think it was Karla or someone who said, why don't we just have advisory councils?

I'm a little lost. I would like to, yes, have this discussion. But I also would like to have the parents chair present and her input as well.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Tonia. I think we heard all of that. And I heard that you were basically asking for making sure that Mary as the Parent Advisory Committee Chair, also has input.

I did flag for her when she let me know that she might not be able to attend this whole meeting, that this was one of the agenda items. And I did promise to follow up with her on it.

So, I appreciate what you're lifting up here, which is potentially a decision getting made. I think the main decision potentially for today-

Tonia McMillian:

Okay. I want to follow up with...

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, sorry. Go ahead, Tonia.

Tonia McMillian:

No, I was going to say because I want to do the same. And yeah, thank you for letting me know that you did flag this for her because she and I haven't had an opportunity to have any discussion at all.

And so, I'd like to talk to you a little further, Claire, because I need a little more clarification of what direction or what the purpose is.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, that's fair, Tonia

Tonia McMillian:

With the outcomes. I'm a little lost council members.

Claire Ramsey:

No, that's fair. And I'm sorry you're having internet problems. That's always the worst during these types of meetings. I can definitely follow up with you.

The intent today would be if people would like to volunteer again, if we do want to do some sort of subcommittee structure for people to volunteer today. And then the expectation would be that those subcommittee members would engage with the advisory committees.

And I think it's very open how and when and the best format so that it's being respectful of you and Mary as chairs and how you want to bring that work forward.

But the idea would be to get feedback from the advisory committee so that they are part of this process as well. So, just recognizing the points you're lifting up. And, Robin, please.

Robin Layton:

Let's see. So how do I want to say this? So, another thing I've been thinking about during this conversation is to caution us into getting us into a situation where we have these subcommittees that are coming up with priorities, which could stall the priorities that are in process.

So, for example, we're not letting go of the fact that we had a rates committee and we're trying to get the true cost funded. And if we then have people out there saying, "Well, don't worry, the ECPC is now also working on something, so we're going to wait for that and not..."

It just feels like this is an opportunity to come up with maybe more excuses to not address funding the true cost. And so, this is a big concern for me that we call it something... I don't want to call it something else. I want to stay focused on our priorities that are in our budget letter.

Again, I do like the idea of six people being able to talk to each other. Well, not really, two people talking to each other in three different conversations.

But I don't want any opportunity to exist that gives anybody the opportunity to say, "Okay, well, we're going to get to that, but now the ECPC is doing this, so we're going to wait to see what they come up with."

And I've been doing this long enough over 40 years to know that that is exactly what will happen. So I like the idea that the ECPC maybe has more power now, I don't know, but if that's the case, let's just stay focused on what we've been staying focused on, which is funding the true costs, which, once that's funded, it'll solve a lot of these other issues.

And then I do have a question about, Claire, what you did put in here. I appreciate you putting in the total amount. I have a couple questions.

Where it says the annual direct services cost of care is determined through the alternative methodology process is 18.7 billion. Is that the cost, the 18.7 billion? Is that what is determined to be the true cost? That's the first question.

And the other question is why does it not include the indirect support services and administrative costs?

Claire Ramsey:

And Robin, just so you know, we're asking Jackie Barocio to, she's at a different meeting right now, but to join through public comment at the end to basically answer those, comment those questions.

Robin Layton:

Okay, thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

So, we're taking them down and we'll have Jackie answer them on the call.

Robin Layton:

Perfect.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah.

Robin Layton:

Okay. So, then just as far as the concern about being able to use this as another opportunity to stall our current priority requests, it's scaring me.

Claire Ramsey:

That's fair. I hope you never think that I or anyone is using that as an excuse.

Robin Layton:

No, no, no, no. I'm not accusing.

Claire Ramsey:

I didn't think you meant, I just want to make sure.

Robin Layton:

I'm not accusing anybody. I can just tell you that the way the legislators work, they're going to pick the easiest thing. And they are supportive, too. But if they see 18.7 billion, they're going to be like, "Oh, well let's take that easy thing that they're asking for."

Because nobody has 18.7 billion that I know of. And it's even more than 18.7 billion. So, I just don't want to give any opportunity to take away. So, no, definitely. I'm not placing blame on CDSS or CDE, it's all about how the process works.

Claire Ramsey:

I hear that.

Robin Layton:

Thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

And I hear that the legitimacy of if you have something really huge and expensive and then you have something that's like, "You know what? What if we give everybody a notice that costs a million dollars if that's much more palatable?"

Robin Layton:

Yep.

Claire Ramsey:

I absolutely hear that and respect that. I want to hear Karla's comment. I do think it's worth us trying to see if we have some consensus on Robin's idea to structure the committees to focus on those priorities within the budget letter. Because I think, then, that could help us understand if structurally that's a good frame for us.

And again, to Tonia's point, I don't think this locks us into if somebody says there's this other thing that we want to, what about this? We can have those discussions at future council meetings. But I think it would provide a frame and a focus.

And we can see if there is at least an appetite for people to volunteer for the committees. And then people could pick, I think, those items out of that letter that they think are relevant.

And it's okay if there are multiple committees saying, this item's relevant to me to the point that immigration's going to be family access and workforce. That makes total sense. And I don't think we have to compartmentalize them artificially just to say that they're only being looked at on one side of the house.

So, let me stop there. Karla, that was a lot of words, please.

- Determine subcommittees

Karla Pleitez Howell:

It was actually super helpful, Claire, because I'll make a proposal using that framework. So, using the letter, I'll offer one subcommittee. And then we'll offer guardrails on some of the things that you shared.

So, proposing a Federal Policy and System Subcommittee to address some of the immigration HR-1 issues that have come up and were in the letter. And then would offer that all proposed subcommittees hold one, the rate issue that's being lifted up, that it is something that's discussed in the subcommittee so that it weeds in the issues that Robin's lifting up.

Two, that there is connection with the advisory committees, and I'm just repeating what Tonia said.

And then three, community engagement that we really think about community engagement in all of this as sort of guardrails for the subcommittees.

And volunteer to work with someone here, I do think someone mentioned making sure that there is folks on the ground that are doing this work. So, offering those guardrails and one proposed subcommittee to do the work that's identified in the letter.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karla. And just confirming that the language in the statute, there's like a subsection five that says, "Develop policy proposals and budget request for the legislature to continue related to facility needs, workforce needs, and family access."

But, again, I think everything we're talking about can be, like relates to those. Yes, exactly. I saw Andrea's hand motion. Exactly. That can all be related to that.

And lifting up Karla's point that true cost of care could be looked at under each frame. And to Robin's point about how that might solve a lot of problems, so not necessarily having to come up with different solutions to sort of patchwork the bigger solution. So just acknowledging all that.

And then, Karla, recognizing your ask for sort of a committee, a subcommittee that is really focused on federal issues. So, let's all think about how that could be incorporated or handled and how the committee wants to structure that.

And Tonia, I saw you had your hand up, so let me stop.

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah, I'm just wondering. So, the way that we use the subcommittees, we can use the advisory committees in the same way, correct?

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, I think in theory you can. There's a couple thoughts there, which could be that if, for example, I'm not trying to volunteer you, but if you said, I want to be on one of these subcommittees, but I happen to also be the Chair of the Workforce Advisory Committee, so whoever else is volunteering for workforce, hey, come join us and let's sort of use that forum to hash this out and talk about some of these things. I think that's totally fine.

I just didn't want to put you or Miren on the hook to necessarily have to volunteer for a subcommittee if you don't have the time or weren't interested. But I think that could structurally work.

Robin, please.

Robin Layton:

Well, at the risk of volunteering Tonia, that's not what I'm doing right now. But is it, my understanding is that two members of a Parent Advisory Committee and two members of the Workforce Advisory Committee are council members.

Claire Ramsey:

That's right.

Robin Layton:

So that's four people right there that are getting input from the advisory. Just like I represent Title V programs, I'm getting input from the 22 schools that I represent. That's not just what's in my head. It's in real time what is happening.

So, I would hope that our council members that are also on the advisory committees sign up to be on these subcommittees. And knowing that everything that comes out of those four council members is coming from the advisory committees. I think that's how the process is supposed to work. Right?

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah, I'm sorry, Robin, but...

Robin Layton:

Yeah.

Tonia McMillian:

I get that. Like I said I'm... I need to just shut up for a minute. I need shut up and process for a minute.

Robin Layton:

No, no, no. No, I was just... No, please don't. Let's have a conversation about it, especially because we got that email about who can attend the council meeting to now. So it's all a little confusing.

So I'm just trying to process the fact that I think we have at least four council members that are also on advisory committees, which I think is fantastic.

Tonia McMillian:

The full council.

Robin Layton:

Yeah, that are official council members.

Tonia McMillian:

Correct.

Robin Layton:

Is that correct, four?

Claire Ramsey:

That is correct.

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah, that's correct.

Claire Ramsey:

Tonia and Miren are on the Workforce Advisory Committee and Lissete and Mary are on the Parent Advisory Committee.

Again, I do want to... Only Tonia is here to speak for herself about whether or not she is interested in signing up to be on a subcommittee. So I don't want to sign up people who are not, I don't want to voluntold people at a meeting. I don't think that's fair.

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah that's what... I'm sorry, Claire. I'm going to talk to Miren. I'm going to talk to Mary. Can we get a timeline for this? I mean, do we have to volunteer right now or...?

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, I think it's a reasonable question, Tonia. A couple things. I think could maybe, if we can agree, I see that Tonia and chat, you said you agree with structuring around the letter.

My sense is if we have agreement on that, that actually takes us pretty far. I think also if we had at least people saying they were interested in being on the subcommittee or willing to volunteer, we can sort of sort out how to handle it in relationship to the advisory committees.

And Karin, you'll keep me honest if I am way out on a limb here. If we don't have formal agreement on subcommittee members today, what does that mean for us?

Does it mean, Andrea, we're definitely signing you up for workforce.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Oh, that's so great. Yeah.

Claire Ramsey:

Do we have a real problem there if we exit this meeting without the established volunteers?

Karin Bloomer:

Based on my understanding, in my view, we don't. I think knowing who is willing to be on a subcommittee is really important today, just so that there can be follow-up and some work.

So I think your two points, Claire, about seeing if there's an appetite for framing topics and recommendations around the budget letter, the priorities letter, and volunteers for willingness to be on a subcommittee that helps sort of drive that work between and at meetings, that would be really, I think, excellent if we had that much.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Fantastic. And Tonia, does that then work for you in terms of your role as the Chair of the Advisory Workforce Committee and to be able to engage Mary as Chair of the Parent Advisory Committee?

Does that feel, if we accomplish those two things today about the structural piece, and at least knowing people who are interested in volunteering?

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah. Yeah.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. The other thing I want to just name, Tonia to your earlier point about it feeling somewhat confusing about participation and who's getting to do what. Let us take that back, too, and see if there's some more we can do to clarify there. Because certainly don't want to add to confusion.

Tonia McMillian:

Claire, so can you and I talk after?

Claire Ramsey:

Yep, yep. I'll reach out so we can get some time on calendar.

Tonia McMillian:

Okay, thank you.

Claire Ramsey:

Oh, yeah, perfect. Okay.

And then, Karla, also figuring out how we're incorporating your asks around the federal pieces into all of this. Why don't you go ahead and then we can figure out all these different pieces. And I think we'll be able to wrap this up by 11:30. But go ahead.

Karla Pleitez Howell:

I'm just following Karin's direction of volunteerism and making that clear. And happy to have someone on here or, but next steps.

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks, Karla. Can we talk for a minute about this piece, about how people would like to handle the federal components that Karla is talking about? Does it feel like it should be addressed within each substantive subcommittee?

So that, again, just a reminder, is facility needs, workforce needs, and family access. Or does it feel like distinct enough that it would be helpful to have people focused on that, bringing that lens into the conversation?

I think it's, again, very open for how the council wants to handle it. It's just a question of, do we have enough people to volunteer for multiple different things? So, I think that's the main thing for us to figure out.

Okay. I don't hear anyone jumping in. Why don't I do this? Again, this is not a formal roll call or anything. But, generally, could people indicate through either verbal agreement, a thumbs up, something in the chat if the structuring around the budget letter as the set of priorities that we are working on in these subcommittees is a workable way for everyone?

I see thumbs up. I see nodding. I see thumbs up. Okay, thumbs up. Great.

Any people who want to raise... Thanks. Dr. Ramos, I see you're in the chat. Anyone want to raise any concerns with that structure?

Okay, great. So, for purposes of this year's recommendations, we are going to use the budget letter that was just agreed upon and endorsed by the council as the structural recommendations that will be further sort of worked on and highlighted within this ABE 5-63 process that we're going to use this year.

I'm going to say this, a little bit, I think will probably be likely, obviously the main revised letter may add... May not create new priorities, but it may put different angles on things.

It may have different things I would assume that will end up being incorporated as well into the recommendation. So, just know that that piece will be coming in May. So, mentioning that.

Where are people looking at...? I know Andrea has said she's willing to volunteer on the Workforce Committee. Where are people at?

Is there anyone else who at this point is at least willing to say, "I'm interested in being on a subcommittee"? And I see Sonia in the chat.

And when you say, either, are you saying either Workforce or Family Access? Is that the two that you're... Or is Facilities one of them? I just want to make sure.

Sonia Jaramillo:

I could do either. Yeah. As needed. Let me put it that way.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Okay. Thank you, Sonia.

Robin Layton:

At the risk of getting in trouble by Donna, who, I think had to take a break, anything to do with the bullet around funding and rate increases, I believe she said she would assist Andrea. Which I think the Workforce falls under that.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay.

Robin Layton:

But, again, we need to confirm that with her.

Claire Ramsey:

Sure. We can put her down as a potentially interested in that, but not signing her up. That's fair.

Robin Layton:

Or that another council member volunteered her.

Claire Ramsey:

Robin approved. Karla, on the federal policy stuff, how do you feel? Would it be something that you want to work with someone else on, really to focus on federal stuff? Or would you rather see it sort of put under Family Access? How would you like to handle that?

Karla Pleitez Howell:

Lean towards federal and the process that, Andrea, you led on the letter, something making sure that that's connected. So, would love to partner if that's something you'd be open to.

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza:

Yeah, I'm flexible to where I'm needed and can make the most impact. So, please, Claire, feel free to massage where you put me.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Okay, that's very helpful. And, Natali, I don't want to put you on the spot. I know you said you were potentially interested, but it was also very hard on your time.

Is it something you want to put at least interest in or no, not at this point?

Natali Gaxiola:

Yeah, I mean I have an interest. But, yeah.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay, great. Let me double check. Where do people land on needing a subcommittee for facility needs? I know that wasn't generally stuff that was lifted up in the budget letter. Again, this is driven by the council.

So if facility needs don't feel like the most urgent things, we do not have to have a separate subcommittee focused on that. Does it feel like that's needed? Do people want that for this year?

And, again, this is not a decision for all time. This is a-

Do people want that for this year, and again, this is not a decision for all time, this is a decision for 2026.

Robin Layton:

That probably would fall under access and I think that's the second bullet, so we can call it whatever you want, but it's accesses is definitely in there in the budget letter.

Claire Ramsey:

In more of a facility related access as opposed to-

Robin Layton:

Yeah. It flows with that as far as I'm concerned.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay. Robin, does that lead you to think it does need to be a separate subcommittee or could it be folded in? I mean, again, we create this, so if you want to say workforce is also going to, might lift up some facility needs or family access might lift up some facility needs. Again, it's-

Robin Layton:

As long as I was just going back to the six people, so as long as if all of our priorities that are in our letter can fall into two different subcommittees, then that's great. If we need another subcommittee because you have more volunteers, that's also great.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay, let us say, I think thank you for the people who have expressed interest so far. What I think we can do, and Karin, again, I'm asking you to hold me accountable to making sure we don't violate meeting rules, but I think we can send out after this meeting a recognition of the decision around the budget letter so that council members who were not able to be here today know of that decision and then see if there's any additional interest from council members who were not able to stay the whole meeting in any of the subcommittees and then we can kind of move forward from there after I've had a chance to talk to Tonia, Tonia's had a chance to talk to Mary. I've had a chance to talk to Mary that we've sort of done some of those additional feedback loop conversations around connections to the advisory committees and then does that work, Karin, again, you tell me if I'm way out of process.

Karin Bloomer:

No, no, no. Claire, I think that all sounds right. I think as long as we're sharing out invitations to join and decisions that have been made, I think we're all set.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay, that sounds good. I think the one thing maybe to be clear on, it's not clear to me how much potential work can happen between now and May because can we actually get a subcommittee formed between then or will we have to make that decision in May?

Karin Bloomer:

The subcommittee has been established.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

For public comment to be allowed.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, I think that's right. Okay.

Karin Bloomer:

I mean-

Claire Ramsey:

Go ahead Karin.

Karin Bloomer:

Yeah. Okay. I mean I wonder if appreciating that there's still discussions to have with the chairs of the advisory committees, I wonder if we do seem to have enough interest today for two subcommittees at minimum. I think I've heard from four council members for sure, and so I wonder if there would be a willingness just to be able to start moving some of this thinking and content forward to bring back to the May meeting. If we might offer to establish two subcommittees today. Again with the understanding that the chairs of the advisory committees will be consulted and we can certainly adjust thereafter, but

that would give us the ability to move forward some work in preparation for the May meeting. So for example, a workforce subcommittee and a family access/federal policy subcommittees that could begin addressing some of the content on the letter.

Claire Ramsey:

Does that resonate with people if we did that today? Again, the alternative is having to wait to May to formally establish the subcommittees, which cuts both ways. If people wanted to start getting to work on any of this now it sort of puts a stop on all of that, but recognizing that there are some additional conversations to have.

Karin Bloomer:

So I wonder if anyone has objection if they could speak up, that might be helpful. Okay. Tonia, you're supportive. That's super helpful to know in your position, especially as chair of the workforce advisory committee. Great. And so chair, my humble thoughts on this, obviously for your thinking and other input, is that a workforce committee that is comprised of Andrea Fernandez Mendoza and Natali Gaxiola and a subcommittee that addresses federal policy and family access comprised of Karla Pleitez Howell and Sonia Jaramillo be something workable thanks to those volunteers.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, sorry. Does that potentially sound workable for people?

Sonia Jaramillo:

It works for me. Would I get information, additional communication regarding that? What is expected in all those?

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Thanks.

Claire Ramsey:

Yeah, totally. And Karla, does that work for you as sort of that framing? Okay, perfect.

Karin Bloomer:

Natali, forgive me. I didn't check to see your reaction.

Natali Gaxiola:

I think we can move forward with that as long as they're the same, as long as I get some help and guidance as into what my role would be and support in that way, I'm okay with it.

Karin Bloomer:

Wonderful. And Andrea, we know you've repeated that you're flexible and available. Thank you. Yeah, so certainly support staff would be reaching out for more guidance and structure around this in parallel with the chair speaking with the chairs of the advisory committees and seeking their input on this approach.

Claire Ramsey:

Okay, thank you to all the volunteers for today. I think what we can take back is for next meeting is whether we think that those two subcommittees are sufficient to handle the different pieces of the work. If people at next meeting think we do need a third subcommittee, we can sort of address that then and this will let people launch off on some of this work, which is great. Also just for moving it all forward, we do expect to agendaize it at the May meeting. So again that we could start digging in and talking like if the subcommittee say, "Hey, we had a chance to meet, we've talked about these items and some of these things, we want to lift that up to the council, get reactions, get thoughts, get new additional clarification or points." That's going to be kind of the iterative process here so that again, by November people feel like they're very much aware of what all the work has been and are feeling ready to hopefully at that point be able to be agreeing to recommendations.

So that's the idea that we will be processing this through the whole year and there will be a lot of connection points with the subcommittee at the council meeting, so it's not like a black box between February and November and all of a sudden magically in November you're getting all this content to try to absorb. So thank you everyone, this was a really good discussion. Appreciate all your good thinking about how do we do this in a meaningful way and I take that part really seriously, that you're all too busy and you have too much expertise and you have too much work on your plate to be doing a needed work. So absolutely, how do we make these actionable, focused, supportive of larger goals that are already out there and have already been established. So all of that really resonates and appreciate that. That really is something the council feels strongly about as they work through this process. So thank you again for all of that. Karin, before I start jumping ahead, I think that's everything on this item, right? I haven't missed anything.

Karin Bloomer:

Yes, that was really well covered. Thank you so much. And I do, if I may-

Claire Ramsey:

Please

Karin Bloomer:

Chair, just want to call out something from a council member in the chat earlier that Sonia Jaramillo had mentioned in chat that she was having technical difficulties and did want to please have us record her vote of support for the budget priorities letter. And so I'll be adding that to the record.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Thank you very much. I am using my phone now, but it's not the same. Thank you.

5. General Public Comment

Claire Ramsey:

Thanks Sonia, and thank you for letting us know that you supported that letter as well. Perfect. So this will move us to our final item, which is our general public comment. Just a reminder to everyone, we do do those short openings of the chat after each individual agenda item, however general public comment is open to talk about any of those items that have previously been discussed. So people should feel free to raise their hands to comment on any item that we have discussed in this meeting during our public comment.

We have just about 25 minutes for public comment today. As mentioned, we also will have as part of public comment, one public comment from Jackie Barocio at CDSS to answer to that question around true cost of care. But since that wasn't agendized as a separate item, we are doing it through a public comment mechanism just to make sure that it all is above board. So at this time, Karin, let me turn it over to you to do any technical stuff that's needed to make sure members of the public know how to raise their hand if they're interested and ask that... And I see Jackie has raised her hands, so perfect. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you Chair. Yeah, so now I'll review the process for taking general public comment. First we're opening the chat feature for those who are attending virtually for written public comment and that will remain open until we adjourn. We'll also now be inviting verbal comment. At this time, if you'd like to be in the queue to speak and you are a remote attendee, please use the raise hand feature at the bottom of your zoom screen or at the bottom of the attendee panel and I will call on you one at a time to unmute.

I will also be looking for members of the public here in the physical space for any interest in providing public comment. We ask that speakers keep their comments to no more than two minutes so that we can accommodate as many speakers as possible in the time we have. I will gently let you know when you have 30 seconds left and when your two minutes is up, please understand that public comments are statements submitted for the public record. Council members are asked not to respond to questions or comments at this time. And with that, we will invite the first person in the queue to speak, in this case, Jackie Barocio, please go ahead.

Jackie Barocio:

Thank you. Jackie Barocio, department of Social Services wanted to respond to two questions that came up. One was is the 18.7 billion the true cost of care answer is that the \$18.7 billion is reflective of the total cost of care that represents the actual program expenses to operate child care programs. So as folks may recall, these were calculated using the alternative methodology, which was the state moving away from market driven

prices, and I will drop in the link the alternative methodology report that outlines the various cost components that went into that calculation. The second question was why does the cost of care estimate not include admin? So the alternative methodology, cost of care, captures direct service cost, the admin and support costs for contractors will be determined separately and that process is subject to the standard budget process. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you so much. We'll now invite to unmute Deborah Corley-Marzett member of one of our advisory committee members. Deborah, please go ahead.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Thank you so much for that and good morning to everyone. Really quick, I just want to say this, when the public is being asked to take three hours out of their morning to be a part of these meetings, the last thing we want to hear is that we're on a crunch time. I know there's a lot of information to share, but I think time crunching is insulting to the public, the panelists and the presenters. It's not about the time, it's about the clarity, the understanding of what's being shared and the state's willingness to listen to the public about what's being discussed. I also want to make a note about our families are living in trauma every day because the uncertainty of not knowing what the day's going to bring, it really hurts my heart to know that little ones are bringing backpacks to daycare because they don't know if something's going to happen with their parents or with themselves, trauma every day.

Also want to note that the training fund, CCPU's Training Fund has been holding Know Your Rights trainings for providers as far as the subcommittees are concerned in these committees, I love discussions, conversations and recommendations. They're great, but is the state doing this just to meet a requirement to have a work group? Because I feel that an open, robust conversation with the state about the discussions, about the conversations and the recommendations is more powerful. It's not about sitting here fulfilling a requirement and flapping our gums. Flapping our gums, it's overrated. We need to get the work and do the work that's being recommended by these work groups. And also, I want to say that that state budget was on point. It was clear, and thank you to those who put it together. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Next we have Oscar. Oscar, we're unmuting you on our end. Please unmute and go ahead.

Oscar Tang:

Hello. Can you hear me?

Karin Bloomer:

Yes.

Oscar Tang:

Hi everyone. My name is Oscar Tang. I'm from San Francisco. I want to speak from the perspective of family child care providers on the ground. We just heard conversation, discussion about rate reform, fiscal stability, enrollment based funding and site closures. I want to connect that to what providers are experiencing under UPK expansion. Again and again, I'm hearing from family child care providers about the impact on their business and their livelihood. This is not abstract. We are seeing problems close, steadily, quietly more and more. Yes, there are projections. Yes, there are expansion targets, but from where we stand, those projections are primarily driving district growth and funding allocation. They are not being used as part of a shared mixed delivery planning process that accounts for existing community supply. And when there is no mechanism to adjust based on real-time local supply, the damage compounds. Providers operate on extremely thin margins.

If we use something simple like Maslow hierarchy before we can focus on quality improvement, workforce development, alignment or innovation, we have to survive when enrollment drops because new seats are added nearby without coordination, providers fall back into survival mode and when a whole sector is pushed into survival mode, it cannot meaningfully engage in system building. We are talking about fiscal stability and resilience minutes, but expansion without alignment is stabilizing the very providers who have been serving communities for decades case. So I want to ask an honest question. If the mixed delivery system is our state's goal, why does implementation feel like zero-sum growth? Is the long-term direction one where family child care continues shrinking until it disappears? Because from the provider perspective, that is what it feels like. The damage is not theoretical, sites are closing. Relationship-

Karin Bloomer:

Please wrap up.

Oscar Tang:

... Are disrupted, yeah. Neighborhood-based care is being lost if we truly want mixed delivery to work. Projection must guide coordination, not just expansion. That means transparent, local data sharing, mandated collaboration with community providers and real adjustment mechanism when supply already exists. From the ground, the current trajectory is not stabilizing the ecosystem, it is weakening part of it. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you Oscar. We're now going to invite Sarina Lynn to unmute.

Sarina Lynn:

Hi. Yeah, thank you so much for your time. I know you're not allowed to respond, but I just wanted a little bit more clarity about the 18.7 billion. I'm confused why it continues to be referred to as reflective if we did the study to make sure that we could understand the true cost of care. And so everyone on this call understands and all the subsidized providers are paid by reimbursement rate. So CDSS could much easier reflect this as what does this mean to our reimbursement rate? If we're talking about 18.7 billion, what

are you proposing as the reimbursement rate and how much has it gone up from what we're receiving now? I think that would be much easier for people to understand.

The second piece, I want to just reinforce everyone on this call and this work group, I'm so thankful for your work and they continue to say the importance of the true cost of care and the increased rate that's based on the true cost of care and I just want to raise that up again as of primary importance and I hope we never lose track of that until we're actually granted it. We started this process years ago and we were promised years ago that we would have the true cost of care. We're still not there and so it's super frustrating, but I appreciate all of the work, but I also on these subcommittee work groups would say, please, please until we get the true cost of care, that is the number one. I almost don't want to hear about anything else until we get the reimbursement rates.

Karin Bloomer:

30 seconds.

Sarina Lynn:

I think that's it. Wrap that up right on time. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you so much. We'll take Lisa Becerra next and then we'll turn to individuals here in the physical room and then back to remote participants. Lisa Becerra, please unmute and go ahead.

Lisa Becerra:

Hi. I'm grateful to be able to participate. I wanted to just share that it's my first time even knowing about this council meeting, but I do represent women and families who work in the construction industry and I just want to put it out there that the need right now in this industry is for flexibility. We want to be able to allow these people to have child care that aligns with their work schedule, early mornings, late shifts, and some of them are also telling us that construction pays well, so they may surpass the income threshold to qualify for affordable care, what other resources are out there that we can offer them. So again, grateful to be here. Just wanted to make that comment.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you so much. I'm now going to turn to individuals, members of the public in the room here and see if there's anyone who'd like to speak. Yeah, please go ahead.

Nicholas Sarastavi:

Good morning everyone. I am Nicholas Sarastavi from the Montessori Children's Center in San Francisco, so I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to the council members to the chair. I drove up from the city today because I feel like this council may be actually helpful in supporting me with some stuff. I have a personal request and then some policy suggestions that I want to bring up. Well, in particular I wanted to share first a little bit about our school. We have been open for 50 years in the city and in 2024 our

founder and director, she passed away and with her our license went as well. And just in September we renegotiated the lease for the space. We've started hiring a world-class director. We've been paying our insurance, paying rent, submitted everything to CDSS but haven't heard anything. We've been very proactive in reaching out. We've called, we've emailed, we've visited our regional site in San Bruno and we've heard that things are still in process.

It's been about 118 days since we've heard that as we've been hearing still in process. And since then we've spent about \$95,000. We are burning about \$15,000 per month and that's on our rent, our salary for the director, insurance. And we have no income, no open date, and we keep getting the same question from families because we're getting a lot of families coming in and asking us, when are you going to open? And right now it's very unclear and the communication has been just those three words, still in process. So the reality that we're kind of facing right now is that we want to commit to these families where we apply for a license for 75 kids, but our lease has already started, our payroll has already started and the license has nowhere to be seen.

Two things I really want to ask is if this committee can really help us or this council can really help us get our application reviewed and get the schedule visit so that 118 days can kind of end today, that we can start serving the families that are applying for us so we can have dates to share with them so we know when we can start. Secondly, in line with what we've been experiencing, I really wanted to suggest a policy where California could create sort of an expedited licensing pathway for childcare centers. We carry very different commercial obligations than home-based providers. We have commercial rent, we have to hire credentialed staff. We have to get a higher insurance rates and a delay that maybe a home provider can survive, it will close a center. So the really need a process that reflects reality a lot better.

Karin Bloomer:

Okay, wrap up please.

Nicholas Sarastavi:

Yes. Well, I really want to just say thank you. California wants more seats. We saw in the letter, we know in the master plan for expansion everything. Our site has them, we're ready to fill them. I just need your help to do that. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Turning to members of the public back online, Rebecca Grasty, we're going to unmute you on our end. Please unmute and go ahead.

Rebecca Grasty:

Thank you. To his point of that, there are in fact seats. There are in fact seats and spaces for children in family childcare and in centers. If we align the age range groupings from centers to family childcare so that access to 10,000 infant spaces will open overnight without any cost to the government, it will help sustain family childcare.

It will help keep these spaces open. So please use that directive from Jackson and suggest this happen in California. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Next Manju Kumari, we're going to unmute you on our end. Please unmute and go ahead. Manju Kumari, could you please unmute on your end and begin.

Manju Kumari:

You can hear me?

Karin Bloomer:

Yes.

Manju Kumari:

Oh, hi. This is Manju from Santa Clara County and I am childcare provider. I have been this in this field almost more than 24 years and it so frustration to listening all those things. I don't see anybody in the panel or they understand how we work. We don't work like nine to six jobs. We work 12 or 15 hours in a day and what we are getting, we have zero enrollment now. Lots of the family child care provider are closing their door and when they need it, we feel like misused or whatever, I can say, I don't know what the word use. When it was the COVID, we were the one that stand behind the people, we were contacted, like the essential child in essential provider and now it is the mixed delivery or pre-care TK or whatever is there, we have no enrollment because even the parents, they don't understand where to go, how to go.

They understand like, oh, going to the child in the preschool, that is the best things and I don't see many people, they talk for us and we don't have time. We work with the small little children. We cannot get distracted by three, four hours to using this the panel and doing some. One of my friends just, he called me and then I just join on and 80 20% rule, it's just killing us. We cannot go to the doctor. We cannot go anywhere. If we go, we have to close the daycare because the rule follow. We have to be in the daycare all the time, only 20%, maybe one hour we can go-

Karin Bloomer:

30 seconds left.

Manju Kumari:

We do anything.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Ms. Kumari and Deborah Corley-Marzett, I see your hand again. Please go ahead.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Oh, thank you for that. I wasn't quite sure I was going to be able to speak again. I just want to say something to the gentleman that spoke. I also want to just say that family daycare providers who are relocated within California from one address to another address, we too would like to have that expedited. We too would like to have that sped up. So family daycare providers are truly suffering as well because we got families who are sitting stagnant and thinking, okay, my provider is moving from one address to another, how long is that going to take and they can also lose their businesses and homes.

So if that suffering goes two ways, we are also suffering to the point the young lady was speaking about the rule, the 20/80 rule. We all know that's an issue. We all know that's a problem and we all know that's something that has to be fixed, so let's get on top of that. Again, thank you for being here. I truly wish that it was all in one because conversations and just talking and doing nothing goes nowhere. We need to be moving and solving these solutions and putting these conversations and discussions to work. Thank you again.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. Next we have Deo Agustinn. We're unmuting on our end. Please unmute on your end and go ahead.

Deo Agustin:

Can you guys hear me?

Karin Bloomer:

We're having trouble hearing you. Could you please get closer to your mic.

Deo Agustin:

Okay. How about this one? Can you hear me?

Karin Bloomer:

You're a bit muted, but please go ahead. We'll listen closely.

Deo Agustin:

Okay. California's current patchwork approach to early childhood education is failing providers and families alike. To achieve true equity and quality, we must move beyond siloed management and create a cohesive system that integrates child care centers, family, child care homes and family plan and neighbor providers. Uniform standard, not divided silos. A single streamlined regulatory and support framework that recognizes the unique value of each setting while ensuring every child has access to the same high quality standards. A true cause of care formula that applies to all provider types. Ensuring that FFM and home-based providers are not left behind by a system that favors large scale centers. A no wrong door policy where families can navigate their options through one unified state system rather than a confusing web of different agencies and programs. The goal should be one system, one standard of excellence and one fair way to pay the workforce. We urge this committee to stop treating these

groups of separate entities and start building a unified infrastructure of California's future. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. With that, we've concluded general public comment and I'll turn it back to the chair.

Claire Ramsey:

Thank you for everyone who just provided a written or verbal comment. We really appreciate your testimony and thank you for being at this meeting today. Council members, thank you for your engagement throughout the meeting. It was really nice to see all of you again today and we hope to see you at our next quarterly meeting on May 27th where we will have the subcommittee share their initial work and the budget letter subcommittee will share a draft for the May revised letter. With that, our meeting is now adjourned at 11:53. Thank you everyone. Have a great day.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you.

END OF TRANSCRIPT