

## Joint Legislative Budget Committee

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

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February 9, 2021

Ms. Keely Martin Bosler, Director  
Department of Finance  
Room 1145, State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Ms. Bosler:

In a letter dated February 1, 2021, you notified the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, pursuant to the provisions of Section 28.00 of the *2020-21 Budget Act*, of a request from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) for an adjustment in spending authority for the Public and Environmental Health Program to support local public health agencies in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, CDPH is requesting an augmentation of expenditure authority of \$1,187,498,000 to Item 4265-111-0001 for unanticipated federal Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that will support testing, contact tracing, vaccination, surveillance, containment and mitigation. The letter requested a waiver from the 30-day legislative review period.

I appreciate the effort CPDH and the counties put into developing an equitable formula that recognizes the communities most impacted by COVID-19 by balancing the factors of population, poverty rates, and race/ethnicity.

As the Administration continues to work with local public health agencies in responding to the pandemic, I urge the Administration to focus on the equitable distribution of testing and vaccines. Many of our most vulnerable communities still do not have readily accessible measures that will help slow the spread. As the Administration moves forward and provides more support to public health agencies, hard to reach communities should be a priority and new technologies and services like rapid home testing, home vaccinations for people who are home-bound, worksite based vaccinations for the most impacted farm and factory workers, or transportation vouchers for people who lack transportation necessary for the super-sites could be

a viable options to improve equity. I urge the Administration to work with local agencies to target the hardest to reach communities that are the most impacted by the pandemic.

In addition, I respectfully request CDPH provide the JLBC with quarterly progress reports on work plan milestones including the measurable performance data as required by the CDC. This would assist the Legislature in understanding the progress and needs of local public health departments going forward.

I want to note that some of my colleagues are concerned that county, city, and other local partners participating in vaccine distribution, contact tracing, testing, and other response activities are reportedly facing cash flow challenges as they await federal reimbursements. As decisions are made about how to support local agencies with future state and federal funds, I encourage the Administration to consider ways the state can provide temporary cash flow assistance to local entities that need help in coping with federal reimbursement delays.

In conclusion, I have reviewed the request and concur that the change is aligned with the requirements of Section 28.00. The proposed use of the funds will provide local public health departments with additional resources that will help slow the spread of COVID-19. In addition, I approve your request to waive the 30-day review period, in order to allow local public health departments to maximize the use of federal funding in response to the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Skinner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Skinner  
Chair

cc: Members of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee