SUBJECT:    SB 586 (HERNANDEZ) CHILDREN’S SERVICES REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Brown:

The below-signed organizations respectfully request your signature of SB 586 (Hernandez), which will help ensure that the re-design of the California Children’s Services (CCS) through the Whole Child Model (WCM) program proceeds smoothly, with adequate safeguards in place to preserve the quality of care CCS-eligible children and youth receive. The bill sets forth a thoughtful, patient-centered framework that preserves the positive aspects of the CCS program while reducing fragmentation of care delivery to better serve children with complex medical needs and their families. Specifically, it:

- Requires participating counties and managed care plans to meet robust readiness requirements before shifting full responsibility for care management of CCS-eligible children and youth to Medi-Cal managed care plans.

- Requires an impartial, independent evaluation of the performance of the first group of counties and County Organized Health System (COHS) plans implementing the WCM program before additional counties can be authorized to transfer CCS care management to their local Medi-Cal managed care plans.

- Requires that CCS program standards and provider participation standards remain the responsibility of the state CCS program so they can be enforced and applied equally across all counties. The measure also requires that treatment decisions continue to be based on CCS guidelines, or if such guidelines do not exist, to be based on guidelines and protocols that are medically appropriate for this fragile pediatric population.

- Allows CCS-eligible children and youth to request to continue having their case management and care coordination performed by their existing county public health nurses.
• Requires managed care plans that are responsible for CCS to meet access/quality benchmarks to ensure team-based care coordination, appropriate provider referrals, and family access and supports consistent with those available in the current CCS program.

• Requires DHCS to pay managed care plans in the WCM program a separate, distinct rate for CCS children to ensure children and youth with CCS-eligible conditions are identified early and tracked so their health outcomes can be monitored and evaluated over time.

• Requires the state to continue funding higher reimbursement rates for CCS providers, and requires managed care plans to pay CCS physicians a rate that is equal to or greater than the current CCS rate to ensure CCS-eligible children and their families have timely access to qualified providers with appropriate expertise.

• Ensures CCS-eligible children and youth, their family members, and caregivers will have opportunities to provide feedback and participate in decision-making as DHCS moves ahead with the re-design and later expands it to additional counties. Each managed care plan must also have a family advisory group for CCS families to deal with issues of primary and preventive care coordination and transition-age youth.

• Allows CCS child or youth to keep their existing CCS providers, prescription medications, and specialized durable medical equipment providers for at least 12 months.

• Protects the regional system of CCS providers including children’s hospitals, special care centers, and pediatric specialists and subspecialists, who form the regional backbone for all pediatric specialty care in California for all children.

For these reasons, we strongly support SB 586 (Hernandez) and respectfully request that you sign it when it comes before you.

Sincerely,

Alta California Regional Center
American Academy of Pediatrics, California
American Nurses Association California
Apoyo de Padres Para Padres
Arthritis Foundation
California Children’s Hospital Association
California Chronic Care Coalition
California Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition
California Hepatitis C Task Force
California Medical Association
California Rheumatology Alliance
California Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Children Now
Children’s Defense Fund - California
Children’s Specialty Care Coalition
Club 21 Learning and Resource Center
Diabetes Health Magazine
Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area

Down Syndrome Information Alliance
Epilepsy California
Exceptional Family Center
Fair Allocations in Research Foundation
Hemophilia Council of California
International Foundation for Autoimmune Arthritis
LIUNA Local 777
National Association of Hepatitis Task Forces
National Down Syndrome Society
Native Sons of the Golden West
San Luis Obispo County Employees Association (SLOCEA)
SEIU California
The Arc of California
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance
United Cerebral Palsy
UPEC LIUNA 792

Cc: The Honorable Dr. Ed Hernandez
    Donna Campbell, Office of the Governor
    Carol Gallegos, Department of Health Care Services