

# SAFETY NET COALITION



## SAFETY NET COALITION POLICY PLATFORM

California needs a state budget that addresses the needs of every citizen. A budget that:

- Delivers high-quality public services;
- Protects people, the environment, and our quality of life;
- Builds the infrastructure we need to prosper;
- Supports health and wellness;
- Enables people with disabilities to live in and contribute to our community;
- Responds to the needs of our aging population;
- Educates our children;
- Fosters opportunity, economic growth, and strong and vibrant communities.

Threatened cuts to California's budget will deny access to critical services such as medical care, in-home assistance and community nutrition programs. Safety net services currently provide access to supportive programs for tens of thousands of vulnerable children, seniors and people with disabilities in Alameda County. In addition, safety net services will be among the first organizations called upon to sustain our community when disaster strikes.

**The Governor's proposed budget cuts are "penny wise and pound foolish" because they will reduce or close programs that are, in fact, part of the solution to California's budget crisis. In addition, any savings from cuts will be offset by escalating visits to emergency rooms as well as increased admissions to hospitals and nursing homes. Our county's safety net programs are directly connected to our community's level of preparedness for emergencies and natural disasters – and that means safety for every resident, not just for our vulnerable community members.**

The Alameda County Safety Net Coalition supports a budget that preserves and strengthens programs that provide education, safe environments and opportunities for all children. More than two dozen coalition members support a budget that maintains services that promote independence and aging in the community – an investment that prepares for a future when one in five Californians will be 65 or older.

**We believe there are budget choices beyond budget cuts:**

- We oppose arbitrary policies, such as across-the-board reductions, that ignore critical priorities;
- We advocate a balanced solution to the budget crisis, rather than a budget that seeks to solve a fiscal challenge solely through cuts and borrowing;
- We support raising the revenues needed to prevent cuts by a variety of means –
  - Closing tax loopholes
  - Eliminating the tax cuts of the last decade
  - Updating the state's tax system to reflect our changing economy.

**On behalf of Alameda County's safety net providers and the hundreds of thousands of residents they serve, the Safety Net Coalition urges California's Governor and Legislators to preserve California's safety net services. These services offer essential programs to thousands of vulnerable people in Alameda County, and they are vital to the health of our community and our state. We depend upon our elected officials to advocate for a responsible California budget that keeps its commitment to meet the basic needs of our children, our seniors, our families, and our future.**