



Katie Albright, J.D.  
Chair, First 5 California  
2389 Gateway Oaks Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Shana Hazan  
Vice Chair, First 5 California  
2389 Gateway Oaks Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95833

April 3, 2025

**RE: San Diego Declining Revenue Impact and Need for Improved First 5 Stabilization Fund**

Dear Chair Albright and Vice-Chair Hazan,

I am writing to urge you to collaborate with First 5 San Diego, the First 5 Association of California, and other local First 5 Commissions to address the direct cuts that are affecting communities across the state.

This month, First 5 San Diego is faced with the difficult decision to cut up to \$13 million in vital services to children and families. Programs such as our Healthy Developmental Services (developmental and behavioral screenings and treatment), First 5 First Steps (targeted home visiting), and Learn Well (early learning supports) are all at risk for reductions that will have a direct, negative impacts on children and families in the County of San Diego.

I appreciate that First 5 California has agreed to establish a Resilience Initiative after months of advocacy from local counties and the First 5 Association. However, I am disappointed to learn that First 5 California's commitment has dropped significantly from the \$25 million requested to only \$3 million to be shared among dozens of counties in need. Moreover, my understanding is that the Commission has not established a clear process or timeline in place for the distribution of these funds.

Additionally, I am concerned that the Commission is planning to allocate more than \$100 million for Mass Media Communications over the next few years, while only \$3 million is being provided for counties like San Diego that are facing budgetary shortfalls that will impact direct service provisions for children, families, and caregiving staff. We are in a critical moment in which funds

should be allocated to prevent direct service cuts, rather than awarding millions of dollars to consultants for mass media contracts.

I respectfully request that you reconsider the allocation of funding to Mass Media Communications and instead increase the amount of funding in the Resilience Initiative for counties like San Diego. As you know, the governing statute of First 5 allows flexibility for the Commission to reallocate funding when deemed necessary.

As a County of San Diego Supervisor and Chair of First 5 San Diego, I want to partner with you in maintaining critical developmental services throughout California and ensure our young children and families receive the critical support they need. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your prompt response and action.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Monica Montgomery Steppe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe  
County of San Diego Board of Supervisors, Fourth District  
Chair of First 5 San Diego Commission