



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jamiann Collins-Lopez
(916) 316-1924

Vivian Velasco Paz Appointed to First 5 California Commission

(SACRAMENTO, CA – February 21, 2023) The California Children and Families Commission ([First 5 California](#)) welcomed Vivian Velasco Paz as its newest member to the seven-member commission.

“First 5 California welcomes the appointment of Vivian Velasco Paz, another well-qualified member to the commission,” said Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, First 5 California Executive Director. “Ms. Velasco Paz is an advocate, lawyer, business owner, and more importantly—a mother of two girls. With her background and experience, I look forward to the addition of Ms. Velasco Paz to further strengthen the strong work of the commission.”

As president of [Arte Américas](#), Ms. Velasco Paz is a strong supporter of young children and families and also serves on the board of [Central Valley Community Foundation](#), an organization committed to transformational change through the Developing the Region’s Inclusive Vibrant Economy (DRIVE) Initiative. A major investment of the DRIVE’s initiative focuses on children, pre-conception to age five.

“As a small business owner, a mother of two beautiful daughters, and an advocate for children, I am humbled to be appointed to the commission. I look forward to working with my fellow commissioners and First 5 staff,” said Ms. Velasco Paz, adding, “There is so much work to be done on behalf of children, especially children of color and those in rural and low-income families. We must enable children and families to overcome their system issues, traumas, mental health issues, and those caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, a nationwide affliction. I will work to ensure California’s children can succeed.”

Ms. Velasco Paz earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Brown University and a Juris Doctorate from UC Berkeley School of Law, focusing her talents on rural economic development, law, and business. In addition, Ms. Velasco Paz completed a clerkship in the late Senator Edward Kennedy’s Judiciary Committee Office, served as a Rural Policy Fellow in Washington, DC, and spent six years as both a corporate and government litigator, including Assistant Attorney General in Chicago, Illinois.

Ms. Velasco Paz was appointed by Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon and will be formally sworn in as commissioner at the commission’s March 3, 2023, meeting.

###

ABOUT FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child’s first five years—to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.cffc.ca.gov.