



August 22, 2024

INFORMATION ACTION

SUBJECT: PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

Strategic Plan Priority Areas and Goals:

Priority Area I: Child Health

GOAL: All children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.

Priority Area II: Child Development

GOAL: All children birth through age 5 have high-quality, nurturing environments that ensure their learning readiness.

Priority Area III: Family Functioning

GOAL: All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.

RECOMMENDATION

First 5 California (F5CA) staff recommend the Commission approve up to \$4,000,000 over three years for a public relations (PR) campaign.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Focused on the Commission's statutory mandate for systems change, this PR campaign is designed to advance and achieve the North Star and Audacious goal through public will-building and changing public perceptions around intractable topics that impact children and families among stakeholders, policymakers, and the broader public.

This PR contract design strategy is responsible for F5CA's past success in transforming policy related to Paid Family Leave. Among other essential PR functions, this investment's goal is focused on the Whole Child Raise California Strong Campaign related to California's childcare crisis. The campaign includes development of tailored messaging and materials, audience research, partner coordination, and promoting F5CA's whole child programs through a custom PR strategy inclusive of social media, web tools, podcasts, earned media, and other partnership tactics. The overall goal is to

build stakeholder support, expand F5CA influence, increase visibility, change public opinion, and strengthen public will for systems change related to California’s childcare crisis.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Historically, F5CA has separated media and PR campaigns into separate contracts; however, for the most recent investment, these efforts were combined into a single contract for the first time. This structure provided operational flexibility during a critical time of strategic transitions under the new North Star direction. However, this amalgamation also led to challenges in distinguishing the specific roles and impacts of media versus PR activities. These challenges, as well as the more established condition of F5CA’s current media and PR operations, have underscored the necessity to revert back to separate contracts to enhance clarity and effectiveness. As such, the detailed recommendation that follows is designed to provide clarity on the purpose of the PR campaign while also seeking Commission approval to authorize funds for the PR contract solicitation.

FISCAL DETAIL

This request is for up to \$4 million from the Media account over three years (Fiscal Year 2024–25 through 2026–27).

ATTACHMENTS

A. The Childcare Crisis in California & 5 Pathways for Change