



August 5, 2019

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 3086  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 1403 (Carrillo) – General Assistance: Eligibility  
As Amended on July 11, 2019 – OPPOSE  
Set for Hearing on August 12, 2019 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Portantino:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) write to regretfully express our opposition to Assembly Bill 1403 by Assembly Member Wendy Carrillo. This bill would require counties to alter their locally established General Assistance (GA) eligibility levels to provide county-funded assistance to certain parents who are ineligible for CalWORKs benefits and who are currently statutorily ineligible for GA.

Currently, GA (sometimes also referred to as General Relief or GR) benefit levels and eligibility are established and 100 percent funded by counties. Each county has the statutory discretion to determine the amount of cash or in-kind assistance it provides for indigent residents, including the duration of aid. The counties' authority to establish GA levels in ways that best meet the needs of each community is important and necessary. AB 1403 presents a significant and precedent setting infringement on our statutory GA authority by imposing a statewide mandate for a specific population and providing no state funding for this expansion of local services.

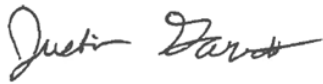
Over the preceding months, our organizations have worked collaboratively with the author and sponsors to address our concerns. Recent amendments have resolved the policy concerns and only fiscal concerns remain. To address these concerns, our organizations offered an amendment that would make this requirement subject to an appropriation in the annual budget for this purpose. We believe this amendment strikes an appropriate balance between county safety net requirements and the priorities of the Legislature. If the provision of additional cash assistance to certain individuals who are ineligible for CalWORKs benefits is a goal for the Legislature, a funding source should be identified and prioritized as part of the annual budget negotiation with the Governor. It should not fall on the counties to fund this program out of their own general fund budgets, especially given the limited revenue-raising authority California's counties are granted.

We continue to engage with the author and sponsors on this issue and have now reached a conceptual agreement on language that would address these fiscal concerns. While we

maintain our oppose position based on the bill that is in print, we are hopeful that we can continue to work collaboratively to refine the language that would be amended into the bill and fully resolve these fiscal concerns.

Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Justin Garrett  
California State Association of Counties



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey  
Urban Counties of California



Tracy Rhine  
Rural County Representatives of California



Cathy Senderling-McDonald  
County Welfare Directors Association

cc: The Honorable Wendy Carrillo, Member, California State Assembly  
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Debra Cooper, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Joe Parra, Senate Republican Caucus